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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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On Choosing Books

THE considerable success of The Book-of-the-Month Club and The Literary Guild, and the increasing circulation of various literary and critical magazines, is the theme of a discussion which rolls and rumbles through literary clubs and coteries, and sends lightning sparks of wisecrack and sarcasm through columns and after dinner speeches. There is, it seems, a widespread fear that honest Americans who have already standardized their shoes, their canned goods, and their cigarettes, will now standardize their choice of books and debase their critical intelligences.

It is a natural fear, and a good theme for those who regret the good old times (in which they never lived) and look with forebodings toward the future. It is a favorite theme of the fastidious critic who follows himself the practice of the already standardized and speaks upon mere rumor without bothering about the facts.

The facts are significant. Publishers' lists show that American reading has become steadily broader, better distributed, less standardized in every decade since the end of the nineteenth century. In the late 'nineties or early nineteen hundreds, conditions were probably at their worst. That was the day of the real best seller, when half a dozen books sold up to half a million copies each, when the general reading population *all* read the same five or six books —and very few others—when two thousand copies was a good sale for a serious non-fiction book, and three hundred thousand a moderate distribution for a popular milk-and-water novel. *That* is standardization—and we had it.

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The causes of the change in taste and the broadening of interest which came about 1910 are too complex for discussion in this brief article, but the accompaniments—the new vitality in criticism of contemporary letters, evident from this date onward in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Yale Review*, the old *Literary Review* of *The New York Evening Post*, *The Dial*, *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The Saturday Review*, *Books* of *The Herald-Tribune*—are indications of progress which would tell the story without statistics. From that time onward the number of titles of books widely read has steadily increased, the number of copies sold of non-fiction books has steadily increased, the volume of best-seller fiction has decreased, the quality of books successful enough to gain a fairly wide circle of readers has constantly lifted. The ten thousand best reading, most cultivated, best educated Americans read much the same sort of books that they would have read in the 'nineties. But the hundred or two hundred thousand intelligent and reasonably cultivated Americans have improved their reading taste, broadened their reading interest, exercised judgment in their choice of books, all out of proportion to the increase in population. If this be standardization, let us have more of it.

Of course it is the sheerest nonsense to speak of the critical reviews as agents of standardization, and probably no one who reads them does so. The loose talk about the book-choosing organizations has more reason behind it, since it comes usually from those whose exceptional opportunities make any such help unnecessary if not impertinent. The man with a full purse, a trained mind, and the run of a great book store, or he with twenty years hard reading behind him and a library, public or private, to borrow from, needs no one to do his selecting (especially if he subscribes to a critical magazine!) and is inclined to be contemptuous of advice proffered to others less fortunate. But such talk is nevertheless ill-directed. These organizations propose to choose carefully twelve good books a year and the sum of their choices so far is rather impressive because of the few conventional best sellers it contains and the wide variety of subjects and titles. Furthermore, The Book-of-the-Month Club, which reaches the most readers, offers an alternative choice, for each book it selects, among fifteen or twenty more—a list which is quite certain to contain

(*Continued on page 663*)

Dog at Night

By LOUIS UNTERMEYER

AT first he stirs uneasily in sleep
And, since the moon does not run off, unfolds
Protesting paws. Grumbling that he must keep
Both eyes awake, he whimpers; then he scolds
And, rising to his feet, demands to know
The stranger's business. You who break the dark
With insolent light, who are you? Where do you go?
But nothing answers his indignant bark.
The moon ignores him, walking on as though
Dogs never were. Stiffened to fury now,
His small hairs stand upright, his howls come fast,
And terrible to hear is the bow-wow
That tears the night. Stirred by this bugle-blast,
The farmer's bitch grows active; without pause
Summons her mastiff and the hound that lies
Three fields away to rally to the cause.
And the next county wakes. And miles beyond
Throats tear themselves and brassy lungs respond
With threats, entreaties, bellowings and cries,
Chasing the white intruder down the skies.

This Week

"The Great American Band Wagon."
Reviewed by *Bernard De Voto.*
"The Letters of Gertrude Bell."
Reviewed by *Bartlet Brebner.*
"A History of American Life."
Reviewed by *William MacDonald.*
Vanguard Press Publications.
Reviewed by *Malcolm J. Davis.*
"The Unforgiven."
Reviewed by *Arthur Ruhl.*
Mr. Moon's Notebook.
By *William Rose Benét.*
"The Bonney Family."
Reviewed by *Allan Nevins.*
"The Gypsy."
Reviewed by *Bernardine Scherman.*
"Meat."
Reviewed by *Gladys Graham.*
Granules from an Hourglass.
By *Christopher Morley.*

Next Week, or Later

"The Standardization of Error."
Reviewed by *E. M. East.*

Tabloids and Truthful Tales

By STRUTHERS BURT

TO the making of books there is most assuredly no end, and every now and then the mature author appalled by his own fecundity and the fecundity of others, becomes weary and writes an essay the purpose of which is to show that novel-making has reached its peak, that some new form of articulateness is on the horizon, and that within the century authors as we know them will be archæological curiosities. Perhaps this would be an excellent thing could it happen. Indeed, it might be an excellent thing, if we were considering contentment only, if to-morrow the human race lost all powers of speech and expression, and any trace of intellectual inquisitiveness. But since this is not likely to occur, the author in one shape or another is likely to be with us always, and a thousand years from now people will undoubtedly still be complaining of the size of So and So's publishing list.

Authorship arises from the most fundamental of impulses and appeals to the most fundamental of desires. To tell a tale or point a moral are actions almost as fundamental as to round your eyes at a lady or hunger for food; to listen to a tale or be illuminated by a moral are reactions almost as fundamental as to kiss a lady or eat a meal. Humanity has been doing all four ever since it became really human and shows no signs of changing. When processes swing from fairly perfect action to reaction, and back, they are usually here to stay. To tell a tale or point a moral has always been merely to cut the veil of loneliness and mystery a little with the knife of your personality, and so to impinge that personality a little on its surroundings; to listen to a tale or warm to a moral is merely to see the edge of the weapon sticking through and to recognize it, except when you hate it, as another aid against isolation. The personality of the reader is thus enhanced as well, although vicariously.

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Books—and when I say books I mean practically everything that is written—make the world both smaller and larger, and this apparent contradiction is what men and women want. They either want the world to be made grandiose and beautiful, or they want it to be explained to them, and so in either case they want to be drawn into narrow, defensive circles of evasion or understanding. The teller of tales evokes a necessary magic; the explainer of conditions is as authentic a middleman as any other. His job is to attempt to interpret to those too busy to do it for themselves the kaleidoscope of the present. The arts have always suffered mortally because people will not realize, especially many of those engaged in them, that they are not ornamentation, but almost as essential as bread.

This has always been so. To sing to the harp was to express yourself, to listen to the harp was also to express yourself. No wonder the writing of a book has been spoken of as parturitive, and the reading of a book as orgastic. Both belong among those processes whose conscious or unconscious intention it is to pierce a trifle the blackness of the night about us, and make the universe a more comfortable place to live in. Both, therefore, have always been vaguely regarded more or less as religious exercises. The impalpable and irritating mist that surrounds the author is largely due to this suspicion of priesthood. This has been so; to-day it is more so than ever, for the religion of which the author is priest is being recognized as, at least, the coming religion of the world. Most people still laugh at it, many people attempt to interdict it, but there is no doubt

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that self-expression in one form or another is the next great spiritual release of humanity. Those who laugh, those who are attempting to interdict, had better be attempting to turn this new religion into something constructive. The Herods of the world accomplish nothing.

Man is no longer a part of god, god is all of man. Man is no longer a member of the church; the church, if it is to survive, must learn to become man in his completeness. Only in utmost expression can man and god meet and be the one that they really are.

* * *

If you take this point of view, two things will happen to you. In the first place, if you are an author, no matter how humble, you will not have so many misgivings about your profession; in the second place, whether you are an author or not, you will not become so depressed by the pictorial newspapers, the thousand and one magazines of "real life," the multitude of dreary and inept books. At least, you will not become depressed about them in themselves or what they portend for the future, although you may become depressed about them in so far as they express temporary conditions. Each is merely the work of priests, however ignorant; all their readers are merely worshippers, however uninstructed. It is too much to expect immediate intelligence, universal discrimination, fine good taste. Religions infinitely older must still find room for crude sects and absurd rituals. Moreover, the first thing that any new religion does is to set the common people free, however much it may later oppress them, and for awhile, of course, they have little knowledge of how to use this freedom.

I have a friend who edits a string of "I Confess" magazines. He does not do this for his own pleasure, he does it because it is a good business. At first I thought him cynical, and his cynicism annoyed me. Here were magazines that were untrue from cover to cover. They weren't even the vulgar recitals of the neurasthenic unashamed, they were made up out of whole-cloth. "But why not?" he asked me. "My magazines are read by people who read nothing else. If they hadn't my magazines and the tabloids, they would read nothing. As to the stories being fakes—most people know that, anyhow."

At the time this argument, the one commonly made, seemed to me sophistical. It was better for these people not to read than to read the inflammatory and dangerous stuff they were reading. And then I saw that it was I who was sophistical. My opinion was the opinion that through the ages has stood back of all suppression, all persecution, all intellectual and moral cruelty and snobbishness. And one thing was certain. No liberal democrat logically could hold such an opinion. To do so would mean denial of the liberal democratic doctrine of slow, unconscious, mass improvement and would be to fall back on the Tory doctrine that life was created for the fortunate few and should be maintained as such, by fire, sword and the church. Now there is part of me that likes the Tory doctrine—naturally. To be borne on the shoulders of slaves is delightful—if you do not happen to be a slave. When slaves are liberated, at first all sorts of unpleasant happenings are bound to occur, and much as you may want to, much as it might do him good, you cannot beat a liberated slave. For awhile the world is not half so nice a place for the sensitive minded to live in, although it is a more interesting place. In the end, however, it is a much nicer place for the sensitive minded to live in, for, if they are really sensitive minded, they cannot be altogether happy in their remote luxury if around the corner someone is starving to death.

* * *

Preventative medicine has shown us that if you wish to prolong the lives of the lovely and the great you must begin by prolonging the lives of the ugly and the unimportant. The scent bottles the noblemen of England and France carried through the reeking streets of London and Paris were not effective means of stamping out smallpox. Until all men and women become self-expressive, no matter what it is they are doing, the world will remain at a stalemate, and literature itself cannot achieve the importance or the as yet undiscovered beauty of which it is capable. At all events, no matter what we think, with the printing press, the engine, the radio, the newspaper, and so on, we have turned lose the whirlwind, and the best we can do is to try to ride it.

That self-expression should be disciplined and constructive goes without saying. Goethe said the final word on that when he wrote that every increase in human freedom and knowledge should be accompanied by an equal increase in self-control. Quite so. But unfortunately that predicates on the part of humanity a coherent intelligence which does not exist. Only the wisest men ever learn from the virtues of others; the majority learn by becoming sick of their own vices. Boredom and nausea, although they may breed crime, also have been the mothers of innumerable temperate saints. The present spectacle in print is not pretty, undoubtedly it incites to much disorder, but how can a man learn to read if he doesn't begin, and why should he begin handsomely if he does not know what pulchritude is? How can you start a man off with *The Atlantic Monthly* if his environment is such that everything in *The Atlantic Monthly* seems to him as grotesquely unlike any life he knows as the torrid recitals of *True Love Stories* would seem unreal to the more temperate wooers of Mr. Sedgwick's fiction? If pots, pans, rape, and gunmen are your neighbors, those are what are authentic to you, and their descriptions give you that fulfilment which is the object both of art and religion. Cure the pots, pans, rape, and gunmen, and you will cure the tabloids, the "I Confess" magazines, the rest of the breed. Until then you will have priests of Baal and Quetzalcoatl.

* * *

There is no use even emitting the sophisticated complaint that the filth of the tabloids, of the "I Confess" magazines, of the pornographic magazines is not sincere filth, and that you would not object to it so much if it were. Of course it is not sincere filth. Sentimentality is another vice of repression. One does not dramatize one's own limitations honestly unless one is a most enlightened person. To write truthfully of pots, pans, rape, and gunmen in their relationship to universal sorrow requires the objectivity of a released view-point. So long as it is possible for a human being to be born and brought up under the Sixth Avenue L it is useless deprecating his or her literary standards. You start too late in the scale. Begin by changing Sixth Avenue.

To condemn the tabloids for printing disgusting details of executions is to put the cart before the horse. If executions are so horrible—and they are—that silence should surround them, then they are too horrible to take place. To turn your nose up at the tabloids is to carry a scent bottle through the slums, and, let it be most earnestly remarked, the minor suburbs of New York, for suburbs can be even more terrible than slums. The Anglo-Saxon ideal of suppression, of censorship, is an inadequate stop-gap, a dangerous palliation, feasible only so long as there is an impregnable class in control. It is worse than that, for it causes many people to believe that something has actually been accomplished, and there is nothing that so pleases the human mind as an excuse not to go to original causes.

The final criticism on all such matters is this. The tabloids, the "I Confess" magazines, the pornographic magazines do not make crime, vulgarity, pornography, except incidentally; pornography, vulgarity, and crime make the pornographic magazines, the "I Confess" magazines, and the tabloids. Do not waste your breath condemning the agent, the panderer. The panderer is never more than a merchant who supplies poor wares to warped human instincts that should be beautiful. Blow hot on the circumstances that warp these instincts if you would be about a useful literary or civic task.

* * *

Once, much against my will, dragged by a small and eager son, I ascended the Eiffel Tower. Afterwards I was glad, for below me had been spread out a parable. The French, like ourselves, are an imaginative, a fierce, and an impatient race, but Paris is one of the great forest preserves—literally—of the world. It is filled with parks and gardens and greenness, and cafés where you can sit down. It is filled with countless cheap amusements; also, and not unimportant, it is filled with myriads of little stations where distracted males can find some comfort. I wondered how many gunmen Paris had been saved merely by glasses of beer, blonde and brunette; by some leisurely place to sit and sip them and watch the crowd. I understood, at least, why *La Vie Parisienne* and *Le Rire*, symptomatic as they are of the still-baffled instincts of mankind, are, none the less, a hundred times better, even nobler, than our reproductions of them.

That is one way of looking at it.

Meanwhile, I recommend those who read *The American Monthly* and *Plain Talk*, and various other periodicals devoted to telling us what is wrong, not to spend all their time with these excellent counter-irritants, but to devote some of it to glancing now and again at the tabloids, the motion-picture magazines, the countless badly printed little sheets that steal about the country like bedraggled, but blatant Scheherezades. If they do they will find out much more quickly and at first hand what is the matter with the curious world they live in.

A Yearbook of Folly

THE GREAT AMERICAN BAND WAGON. By Charles Merz. New York: The John Day Company. 1928.

Reviewed by BERNARD DE VOTO

THE Young Intellectual has perished. He may seek to reanimate his past by publishing reminiscences of the Village in journals he once despised, he may confess that not the esthetic aptitude of concierges, but the reliability of cordials dictates his residence abroad, or, abandoning the lively arts that were to deliver us from death, he may take to the lecture platform. But as a literary force he is dead—and a new generation, happily both merrier and keener, has taken his place. The trouble with the Young Intellectual was that his passion for an America that might some day come of age was essentially Puritanical and his energy was not esthetic but moralistic. He was a romantic, a perfectionist, a millennialist. His successors are hard-minded or, in the word that adequately describes them, hard-boiled. Now, all this may be too bad. It may be a shame that journalism should triumph over moral passion, but there is room for a belief that such un-moral, hard-boiled men as Mr. Davis, Mr. Aikman, and Mr. Merz are more trustworthy interpreters of America and more effective commentators on it than their predecessors of ten years ago.

The Young Intellectual of 1919 was nostalgic for a perfect America—the America that might come about if *The Saturday Evening Post* should publish Waldo Frank, the Boston *Evening Transcript* should admiringly reprint the editorials of Mr. Villard, and the generality of Americans, tactfully guided, should abandon Theda Bara, who then reigned, for the nine hours of "Back to Methuselah." His successors of 1928 are nostalgic also—but with a difference. They perceive more than enough that is offensive in the contemporary pageant. But they do not anticipate that the *Nation's* circulation can be indefinitely increased or that the public can be taught to walk as poets are supposed to walk. The Young Intellectual, having learned French history, looked back with abhorrence on the savage past of America. His successors, having learned American history, infinitely prefer that past to our present and our indicated future. There is a difference in the attitudes: enough to suggest that these very folk may be symptomatic of that coming of age.

What Mr. Merz discerns in the America of 1927 (knowing that 1928 will change its phase, but not its character), is a nation bending its inconceivable energy to the attempt to escape from its own nonentity. While we were an agricultural and pioneering people we at least had identity, autonomy. It was possible to respect the smaller nation that met the realities of the struggle for existence: it is not possible to respect the empire. When there were fewer of us and when the fewer ones had the native decencies of individuality, the nation was not one that, in Henry Adams's phrase, a sensitive man could not contemplate without a shudder. The post-war America, however, has changed all that. We have multiplied riches—and expended them on the radio, the tabloid, the Cook's Tour, and the battle of the century.

"The Great American Band Wagon" is good reading, almost deliriously good. But it is also saddening: the disgust that is always just beneath its surface speaks to the disgust we all possess and do our best to ignore. It is a yearbook of folly—and of folly that, in the quiet hours, sickens and appalls one. That, however, is for the best. The Young Intellectual accomplished nothing. His evangelical fervor completely failed. It is wise to try what contempt can do.

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Mother of the Faithful

THE LETTERS OF GERTRUDE BELL. Selected and Edited by LADY BELL. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927. 2 vols. $10.

Reviewed by BARTLET BREBNER

Columbia University

From Trebizond to Tripolis
She rolls the Pashas flat
And tells them what to think of this
And what to think of that.
Sir Herbert Richmond.

I summoned my sheikhs, I read them your letter and I said to them "Oh Sheikhs, this is a woman—what must the men be like!" *Fahad Bey of the Amarat.*

There's only one Khatun (Great Lady). So for a hundred years they'll talk of the Khatun riding by.
Nuri Pasha Said of Iraq.

GERTRUDE BELL became a myth even before the war, and when in it she was engulfed in the mysteries of secret service and high politics, no tale about her was too incredible to pass current and to put another miraculous stroke in her portrait. My own scanty gossip has brought me such legends as her successful mission of revenge for a brother's death, disguised as a man and behind the Turkish lines, or her being so beloved and trusted by the Arabs of Iraq that she alone after the war conceived and set up the Arab Kingdom in spite of War Office, India Office, Shiahs, and Turks.

It is a satisfaction, then, to have her own letters, which in their entirety and coupled with her books and state papers (such as are available) provide a remarkable picture of a most attractive woman who did slightly incredible things. She had wit and humor and elicited it from others, she had a gift for vivid phrase and moving description, and somewhere she found the energy to sit down night after night till she died to share her life with her family and friends.

* * *

It is bitterly disappointing, then, to find that Lady Bell and, presumably, some co-editors from officialdom, have been circumspect to the point almost of inanity in editing some of the letters. It is pleasant to know that Miss Bell was always interested in her clothes, but it is irritating to be served up with orders to dressmakers and tantalizing hiatuses of printer's dots when the original letters were so obviously loaded with first-hand and frank comment on exciting affairs by a principal actor in them. It simply means that except in the highest places and perhaps even there, myth and legend will persist as the record of what "G.B." did in Egypt, India, and Mesopotamia in 1917 and 1918, at Paris in 1919, and in the more delicate negotiations about Bagdad from 1920 to 1925. If it be added that these volumes are otherwise unique in spite of indifferent editing, that the record of a great traveller is not dignified by good maps, and that the index is a feeble aid, we can turn to pleasanter things.

The United States has risen so swiftly to its present station, and geography has allowed it to be so casual in its international relations, that it is only now that one hears faint whispers as to the existence of a diplomatic caste and the entry into it of recruits from the aristocracy. Presumably from now on "the diplomatic" will win some of the possessors of wealth and brains from its great rival, business. In England it is, of course, an old story, and its importance for us here is that Gertrude Bell was born with an "open sesame" to the class who make a profession of public affairs and derive a class-consciousness from doing so. Her brilliance was thus afforded unusual play and it was assisted by her private means. From childhood, in her own home and at the meetings of her kind, she met and talked with men of affairs. Yet she was no blue-stocking. She seems to have had all of a woman's enthusiasms, but a serious bent as well. It was not quite ordinary, for instance, for her to go up to Oxford to read the Modern History School, and it was quite extraordinary for her to take a brilliant first and to announce her disagreement with a great historical authority who was examining her *viva voce*.

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The Near East won her finally for its own, but the winning was a long steady process. At twenty-three, she had a spring in Teheran and wrote: "That which is me . . . is filled with such wine as in England I had never heard of." Seven years later (1899) a visit to Jerusalem introduced her to the desert. She was back again six times between 1900 and 1914 and finished her great journey to Hail in Nejd in the spring of that year. The knowledge and experience she had gained as a traveller made her valuable at the Arab Bureau at Cairo to which she went in 1915 from voluntary work in the war. Very speedily Basrah and Bagdad claimed her and kept her a voluntary prisoner till her death in July, 1926.

The seduction of the Near East is a curious, but quite recognizable, phenomenon, and it seems to be bound up with a distrust for modern manifestations of Christianity and an admiration for the negative and ascetic philosophy which is brought out by the nomadic life of the desert Arabs. Those who are caught by the lure are like devotees of a habit-making drug and break away with difficulty. There are a number of fairly obvious symptoms, but one, less obvious, which "T. E. Lawrence" revealed in conversation, appears emphatically in Miss Bell's letters. It is recognition of the contrast between town and desert and between townsman and nomad to the discredit of the former in both cases. It can be simply explained as a modern nostalgia for the primitive virtues, and a distaste for the transformation of a lean and athletic prophet into a fat, materialistic hedonist. The important thing is that "T. E." and "G.B." and others like them have

GERTRUDE BELL

tasted the sharp contrast as afforded in the Near East and it has stolen away their content with ordinary Western life. In 1905 Gertrude Bell wrote from Baalbek:

> The great splendid city of Damascus with its gardens and its domes and its minarets, lies spread out before you, and beyond it the desert—the desert almost up to its gates, and the breath of it blowing in with every wind, and the spirit of it passing in through the city gates with every Arab camel driver. That is the heart of the whole matter.

To people like this, prophets still come out of the wilderness, and they themselves plunge into it to purge themselves of the wastes of Western living and, doing so, find themselves disqualified for the ways and companions they have left behind them. They break through our tyranny of comfort and discover a satisfaction which makes comfort a secondary thing.

It is one thing to be addicted to the East and another to justify the addiction to one's self. Gertrude Bell began almost as a tourist. She went back to investigate the successive civilizations whose shattered monuments litter the land between the Mediterranean and Persia, and to trace the great trade routes which have crossed it since before Rome. She had to do it well if at all and therefore became not only a fine linguist and an explorer whose work in quality, if not in quantity, ranks with the best in her field, but so expert in architecture and archæology as to be a valued colleague to Reinach and Strazygowski and to work in the field with Sir William Ramsay. This period of her life has its record in her books and in articles for technical periodicals. Her journeys won for her the medal of the Geographical Society.

The coming of the war wedded her to Bagdad, and the political problems of Mesopotamia won her away from archæology to diplomacy. Hers is the only name mentioned among diplomats and political officers in the Encyclopædia Britannica's survey of the work of British professional women. As early as 1917 she believed in the possibility of an Arab state in Mesopotomia and she was able to make herself so useful to the political officers that she progressed automatically from the rare distinction of being a female British staff officer during the war to the rarer one of being an indispensable, though occasionally presumptuous, secretary to the successive harassed and precarious civil administrations in Bagdad. She earned and kept the love and respect of many of the worried Arabs who were disconcerted by the dissensions and dangers under partial realization of their dream of independence. Khatun (Great Lady) these called her, and Umm al Muminin (Mother of the Faithful), the last of that naming being Ayishah, the wife of Mohammed, and on her return from her last leave in 1925 streams of visitors captured her office and home and kissed her hands, saying "Light of our eyes, Light of our eyes." Officialdom concurred when Sir Henry Dobbs reported to the Colonial Office: "She is in fact a connecting link between the British and Arab races without which there would be dislocation both of public business and of private amenities." Her political rôle dwindled after 1925, but before it had done so, she was already taxing her strength unduly to facilitate archæological research and to secure for the new state a proper share of its material products.

* * *

In looking back on her career, undoubtedly her most extraordinary achievement was that of being a great force in a world characterized by the Islamic attitude toward women. She was not a freak, she was a person, to sheikhs and camel drivers and muleteers and cooks and gardeners. Moreover, she made no formal capitulation to their conventions. She had tact, but she refused to veil, and she did not win her place by being a better Arab than the Arabs. "Lawrence," on the other hand, suffered acutely when he felt that to gain his ends he would be forced to "prostitute" himself. It is an important difference, even granting that both persons were actors in an evolving Islam. "Lawrence" for this and many other reasons has left Arabia. Gertrude Bell could die there happily and beloved.

Be it all as it may, read the letters if only for the sake of becoming acquainted with an archæologist and stateswoman who read P. G. Wodehouse and Eugene O'Neill, and you are likely to agree with the author who wrote that Gertrude Bell "had the gift of making everyone suddenly eager; of making you feel that life was full and rich and exciting."

On Choosing Books

(*Continued from page 661*)

the very best books, serious and not serious, of recent publication.

And what is the result? Every publisher's account and book-store or library record shows that the books on these lists (such lists as in every civilized period have been drawn up by competent judges) are by these new methods actually distributed in satisfying quantities. The good book—whether erudite, elusive, rare, or just honestly excellent—has never had, in this country at least, so good a chance of finding the happy reader, and has never so generally found him. If this be standardization, let the good work go on.

But of course it is no more standardization than is a university course. Judges who select books to be sent out, or draw up a recommended list, are exactly comparable to the group of instructors who organize an English course in a university. Like them, they select for immediate reading not necessarily the most subtle, the most modern, the most esthetic of authors. Sheridan might go in, and John Donne be left for recommended reading, Carlyle might be preferred to Pater. And judges may likewise prefer for 70,000 American readers Tarkington's "Penrod" to Joyce's "Ulysses," a biography by André Maurois to the poems of T. S. Eliot or the psychology of Jung, without raising the question of respective and absolute merit. If advice in the choice of new books is to be frowned upon, let us be consistent and frown upon advice in the choice of old books also. But a better consistency is to condemn no method of selecting good books, the pragmatic justification of which is that more readers read more of them.

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The American Man

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN LIFE. Edited by ARTHUR SCHLESINGER and DIXON RYAN FOX. Consulting Editors: Ashley H. Thorndike and Carl Becker. New York: The Macmillan Co. 12 Vols. $3.50 each.

Vol. II. The First Americans, 1607-1690. By Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker.

Vol. III. Provincial Society, 1690-1763. By James Truslow Adams.

Vol. VI. The Rise of the Common Man, 1830-1850. By Carl Russell Fish.

Vol. VIII. The Emergence of Modern America, 1865-1878. By Allan Nevins.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

TITLES, like taste, are not always profitable subjects of disputation, and the editors of this series were doubtless quite as free to label it "A History of American Life" as Professor McMaster, for example, was to call his great work a "History of the People of the United States." Definitions, however, are of importance even in title-phrasing, and the reader who is offered a considerable series of volumes, in this case twelve, purporting to tell the story of American "life," is fairly entitled to ask in what sense that term is used.

A cursory inspection of the four volumes now published will be enough to show that the American life which the various authors portray has very little to do with what is ordinarily classed as politics, and that questions of constitutional interpretation or change, over which, as the student of American history cannot help remembering, some doughty contests have been waged and are even now going on, are for the most part left out of the picture. Economic history, too, in the accepted connotation of the term, is very much neglected, although not to the same extent as are the political and constitutional sides. What we are offered, instead, is a survey of so much of American life as has been concerned with questions of settlement and climatic adaptation, crops, industries, transportation, wages, housing, food, clothes, education, books, churches, sports, and the host of similar things which make up the daily round of average human experience. Obviously, this is not an all-round view, no deft weaving of all the elements that have made the American nation what it is. The large political matters which from time to time have engrossed public thought, the problems of national unity which have arrayed the nation in partisan camps and imposed the will of the majority upon the variant notions of individual citizens, and the national perils for whose forfending many thousands have been willing to die, have here no distinctive or commanding place. The "History of American Life" is, rather, the history of a people who rose, clothed and fed themselves for the daily task, won such gains as they might from their own labor or that of others, pulled down old barns to build greater, wasted and saved and gambled and played, tolerated vice while commending virtue, yielded easily to the passing whims of style or prejudice, worshipped an unknown God afar off, and lay down to rest with the consciousness that the nation was greater at evening than it had been at sunrise, and in the faith that it would be greater tomorrow than it had been today.

* * *

Nothing of this, of course, is necessarily adverse criticism. History, as the record of all that mankind has done or thought, has not yet been written, and the historian who would achieve anything worth while must parcel the field by a kind of rule of thumb and develop such parts as suit his powers or tastes. So we have had political history, constitutional history, economic or religious or literary history, and a long list of other kinds of history each of which has depicted some separable part of the colossal whole. Now comes a history of American life which, if the four volumes just published are a fair sample of the whole, will recover for us, with vast, industry, sound learning, and admirable proportion, the half-forgotten annals of the common American man. Nothing of the kind so large as this has been essayed before, nothing has swept the mass of material together in so skilful a fashion, nothing bids fair to reconstruct for the present generation so completely the record of the unique social experience which the present time has inherited.

Where all is, in general, so well done, discrimination of better or best may appear invidious. It is no fault of Professor Wertenbaker or Mr. Adams that their volumes offer less of novelty than the others, for the field of American colonial history has undergone intensive cultivation these many years, and Mr. Adams in particular, in his three books on New England, has dissipated a good many myths, dethroned some famous idols, and relegated colonial New England to something approximating its proper place in the historical procession. Professor Wertenbaker, in turn, has already done good service in exploring the nature of southern society, and what he has to say about the other colonies and sections is equally competent. The contributions of Professor Fish and Professor Nevins, however, stand out in special distinction, partly, to be sure, because of greater novelty in subject-matter, but also because of their notably firm grasp of the periods with which they deal. More attentive than his colleagues to the political influences of the time, Professor Fish has reconstructed the social history of the two decades of storm and stress in which Jacksonian democracy was slashing the old order and forming a new, stirring revolt against conventions, and letting loose a store of constructive energy which made "the people" a new force to be reckoned with. Professor Nevins, who surveys the unbridled years immediately after the Civil War, recounts with equal skill the appalling story of political and financial corruption which the most tolerant critic of human weakness would like to forget, and with it the imposing march of industry, agriculture, and western settlement which revealed the nation's better side.

Not all the pitfalls, of course, have been avoided. It is asking too much of any historian to expect him to be equally at home with domestic economy and architecture, or to appraise with equal sureness the merits of farming methods and those of a literary output. Broadly speaking, the books are best when they deal with economic data and manners and customs, less satisfactory where intellectual or artistic life is concerned. Taken as a whole, however, they are a vivid recital of an elemental national story, rich in ordered information, richer still, perhaps, in the suggestion of national characteristics whose developments they trace and in the light which they throw upon the possible future of American culture.

Highways to Heaven

PUBLICATIONS OF THE VANGUARD PRESS, New York: G. B. Shaw, The Socialism of Shaw; P. Kropotkin, The Conquest of Bread, Revolutionary Pamphlets; John Ruskin, Ruskin's View of Social Justice; R. W. Dunn, Company Unions; W. E. Brokaw, Equitable Society and How to Create It; John M. Work, What's So and What Isn't; Jack London, Essays of Revolt; H. G. Wells, Social Anticipations; James P. Warbasse, What Is Coöperation?; C. L. Swartz, What Is Mutualism?; H. N. Brailsford, How the Soviets Work; R. Page-Arnot, Soviet Russia and Her Neighbors; Julius F. Hecker, Religion under the Soviets; Karl Borders, Village Life under the Soviets; Scott Nearing and Jack Hardy, The Economic Organization of the Soviet Union. 1927. Fifty cents each.

Reviewed by MALCOLM J. DAVIS

ENOUGH vanguards make a parade. A review of this column of vanguards of the social revolt, past and present, leaves that impression. It presents a spectacle of so many leaders and cohorts that the last ones bringing up the rear are almost out of sight. At the head of the procession come the Communists—vanguard of all revolutionary vanguards—flaunting the banner of the Soviet Union with its crossed hammer and sickle. And behind them the Socialists and syndicalists with their red flags, the collectivists and the equitists and the mutualists, the coöperative societies, and last—the almost disregarded vanguards of an earlier, less violent day—Shaw and the Fabians, H. G. Wells, Jack London, Kropotkin with his benevolent white-bearded countenance and his gentle philosophical anarchism, and Ruskin, looking now like one of the very early minor prophets and sounding like a voice crying very far out in the wilderness.

The significant point all these volumes of rebellion have in common is that they place the center of emphasis outside the individual and in the social order. The men who wrote them are—by deeply ingrained habit of mind—environmentalists. If we could only get at the characters and circumstances and conditions around us and change them, they contend, how much better and more beautiful the world would be. "To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire," shatter it to bits and remold it nearer to their hearts' desire is their motto—a motto which bears practically no real relation to the ideas that modern research and thought have brought to bear upon the causes and motives underlying the social struggle.

Granting that psychology is still in the preliminary experimental stage and far from being an exact science, nevertheless it is true that investigation and experiment have let new light spread over the field of human consciousness and have begun to illuminate many things that were obscure. Yet in reading these books one realizes that some of the authors never heard—and the others were unaffected by hearing—of the influence of a hidden sense of inferiority in making an irreconcilable social malcontent, or of the potent force of a perhaps over-irritated youthful antagonism to the authority of elders or superiors in producing a thorough-going revolutionary. Certainly none of them takes into account the recognized fact that we are all largely engaged in trying to satisfy our own wills, living out our own picture of ourselves, and justifying it to ourselves and others as best we can. There is no hint of any such self-revealing knowledge between the covers of these books. They breathe indignation against overlords and capitalists and their systems, and against all the cruelties and injustices and stupidities of a bewildered and blundering world. And they are very sure that if the communists or the socialists or the coöperators or the mutualists or the collectivists could run affairs for a while, everything would be very much better.

> Myself, when young, did earnestly frequent
> Doctor and sage, and heard great argument
> About it and about .

Undoubtedly there is value in publishing these volumes of what might be called social revolt classics. Certainly there is practical service to readers who want books on these themes at reasonable prices. And the studies of Soviet Russia seem most worth while, by contrast, because they deal with the actualities of an existing state of affairs. But someone might add to the series a treatise on the theme that the real fight in our day—whether reactionaries or radicals have the upper hand—is for the right of the individual to a free mind and free expression in a machine-and-slogan-ridden world.

Karel Capek, writing of "Shakespeare in Prague," in a London journal says: "I believe there are more Shakespeare enthusiasts in Czechoslovakia, small as it is, than in England, and surely more of his plays have been interpreted. 'Cymbeline,' 'Troilus and Cressida,' and others have, for instance, been performed most satisfactorily in Prague." He then goes on to say that the *mise-en-scène* of a Shakespearian performance in Prague is greatly superior to that in other countries, to which fact he largely ascribes the popularity of the Bard's plays.

S. Fowler Wright, whose novel "The Deluge" has just been issued in this country after having achieved a remarkable success in Great Britain, has written another romance, an exciting story of adventure in an island not marked on any map. "The Island of Captain Sparrow," as it is called, is a fantastic and satirical tale. Mr. Wright, it will be recalled, was past fifty when he began to write "The Deluge" and issued the novel himself instead of through one of the regular publishers.

ERRATUM

By a regrettable mistake the review of Viña Delmar's "Bad Girl," to be issued by Harcourt, Brace & Company, appeared in advance of publication of the book. The novel is not to be published until April. Advance sheets of the volume which were in the *Saturday Review* office were given out for review, and the date of their release overlooked.

The Saturday Review of Literature

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A Panorama of Russia

THE UNFORGIVEN. By GENERAL P. N. KRASSNOFF. Translated from the Russian by OLGA VITALI and VERA BROOKE. New York: Duffield & Co. 1928. $3.50.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

IN "The Unforgiven," the really astonishing General P. N. Krassnoff, continues the story he told in "From Double Eagle to Red Flag" —proceeds, that is to say, from his panorama of crumbling Imperial Russia on into the early years of the Revolution, the White counter-offensives, and the bewildered, nightmare lives led by the shipwrecked "bourzhooy" in their struggles to find footing in a new world.

General Krassnoff is not a creative artist, in the sense in which that phrase is applied to a Joseph Conrad, for instance. He appears to be, rather, an active soldier, who has lived and seen much, has extraordinary visual memory and emotional vitality, and out of these qualities and his own experiences contrives to make something which, at its best, bears almost the same relation to life as fiction of the first rank. His panorama of the crumbling empire, in his earlier book, with all its gaps and unevenness and occasional slips into quite lurid melodrama, did, nevertheless, have a sweep and breadth and variety, which recalled the Tolstoy of "War and Peace." It was easy enough to pick flaws, but the thing actually did have a vitality and bite compared with which the usual run of well-made American fiction seemed the mere dancing of marionettes.

If this sequel does not have quite the quality of its predecessor it is for the very natural reason that General Krassnoff is getting further away here from the more vital days of his own life, from the things that he loved and still hopes to restore, and further into the psychology of the émigré, and to the distant consideration of things he hates and hopes to see destroyed. A desperate homesickness, implied rather than expressed, hangs over the whole book. It is the hopeless nostalgia of a former Russian officer who undoubtedly himself believes, as he makes one of his characters say, that the

> social life of mankind must be organized on simple lines. The simpler they are, the happier will the people be and the better and easier will they arrange their lives. A Czar in heaven who directs and coördinates the forces under him, and a Czar on earth who rules his subjects. When there is a Czar, there will be no more of this abominable squabbling of parties, and this hateful hurry-scurry will cease. Then it will become possible to work, and incompetence will disappear.

But because this simple and medieval creed lies at the bottom of General Krassnoff's thinking and feeling, the reader must not jump to the conclusion that his story, as it actually runs, is the mere embodiment of any such political argument. He is much too much of an artist, too sensitive to the flavors and complexity of life, for that. It pictures life in Moscow, Petrograd, the Crimea, and on the White Army fronts, the moral struggle of the ex-officer who accepts a commission in the Red Army, and of the son who fought against him, of the girl who saw youth slipping away from her unless she deserted her own men for those of the new order; émigrés in Berlin and the Argentine, and the macabre antics of Russian refugees selling their uniforms, dances, folk songs and other "picturesqueness" for the tips and patronizing applause of foreign cabarets. All this and much more, and through it all that persistent, brooding note of homesickness for the old Russia—for the old order, as an understandable arrangement of the universe, and the dignity and beauty that were there as well as obscurantism and backwardness; or for some chance-remembered atom or mood of that old life, if it be only the smell of a country-house.

In so far as his longing for what is gone and his hatred for what has destroyed it, turns the author into the apologist—however unconscious—his story suffers. It is not as "good" as the earlier book. But it is always interesting, and General Krassnoff's fictional treatment of what, in large part, must have been somebody's actual experience, gives his novel value as part of the history of the time.

According to a report from Rome, Professor Trombetti, of the University of Bologna, has discovered the key to the deciphering of Etruscan inscriptions, which have hitherto defined all attempts to read them. He is to describe his discovery before the Etrurian International Congress in April. Archæologists are maintaining in the meanwhile an attitude of "watchful waiting."

Mr. Moon's Notebook

March 1st: Just Craning Around.

The more I think of it the less I can make out of it. Last night there was champagne and today—No, no, no, don't make that pun or I shall scream! No. No. Now. Now. Easy; be easy; everything under control; tha-at's right! Light night—there was—champagne; and today—there's—Hart Crane. That's better. Now it's over. I knew it would be better. I knew I could walk around that obstacle safely; if I only took my time to it. But still—the more I think of it, the less I can make out of it. I mean Mr. Crane's poetry.

I thought I'd be sure to like any writer named Crane. I have always liked the poetry and prose of Stephen Crane and the drawings and writings of Walter Crane. But the poetry of Hart Crane—well, suppose there had been a great deal of champagne the evening before and then the next day you started in reading something like this:

STARK MAJOR

The lover's death, how regular
With lifting spring and starker
Vestiges of the sun that somehow
Filter in to us before we waken.

Oh dear, oh dear! Keep it *away!* There it is coming nearer again. Humming behind its hat! You know I didn't really read that; that's just the way the words *looked* to me on the page. They make more sense than that, really; that's just the way I feel today. But I'm getting all right. Pretty soon everything will come quite into focus. I'll try again now:

THY FACE

From charred and riven stakes, O
Dionysus, Thy
Unmangled target smile.

O, thy unmangled target smile, O—O—*whoooop*, my unmangled target smile, O, o, o, o, that unmangled target smile! Oh, *dear!* There, I feel so much worse again. I *don't* see why I can't read the words correctly. Every time I pick up the book, though, the type on the page seems to form into things like

No more violets,
And the year
Broken into smoky panels.
What woods remember now
Her calls, her enthusiasms.

It's not a question, because there's no interrogation point. And yet it seems to be a question, and it simply breaks my whole afternoon up into smoky panels. And it induces the dangerous frame of mind that sets me to doing the same thing. I know I'm in no state; but still, we'll entitle it "Musette"; and I've got a swell first line to start off with:

MUSETTE

Let us by apples be believed;
No rainy crow
Jangling a heaven sparked with light
Can murk the orchard more;
For apples now relate, remind,
Vertumnian. . .

The neighing night
Falls to flat peace, lays gold on grey;
The rose and violet shower. . .
And this is past.

Your eyes' immediacies.
Apples incredulous of heaven.

Yes, *I* did that. No, that wasn't Crane. *I* did that. Pretty good, eh? That wasn't Crane. That was all that's left of the champagne. And here's another one too. It's even a bit better. I call it

RHETORICAL QUESTION

A dromedary dream all neck
Peered round but patient wax impressed
the die of steel. . .
Poised on a pin-point. Dark
Riddling said Paracelsus
is the illusion yet
Magammon will not miss the way
His house being bright. . .

Pretty darn deep, that one. Ha! I should *say* it is. A lot too deep for *you*, my good man. Yes, *sir*, that's my riddle! Yes, *sir*, taradiddle! Yes, *sir*, that's my riddle now!

I don't think poetry's such a much of a craft after all. There're two poems dashed off just like that, and Crane only has about twenty-five or thirty in his volume. I could do a book in a week. And all as good as those I showed you. And Eugene O'Neill says Crane's poems are "profound and deep-seeking". So are mine. What do you mean by saying mine are not expressions of seeking? They certainly are expressions of seeking. They certainly are deep. Why are *they* jokes, if this sort of thing is considered with the most intense respect by Edmund Wilson in the *New Republic:*

Thy Nazarene and tinder eyes.

Why is that good; somebody tell me? And if it is, why is *this* not good? The little thing as it crawls into my head is called:

MUCKWORK

O vengeful lip
that followed lashing. I had turned
away; the fire engine
clanged through my body yet I turned
away—and then
curled vengeful cracking
like a whip.

I can just *see* those people! Can't you just *see* those people! Pretty darn good too, to stick that unexpected rhyme in at the end. Pretty daring. Then, if one wants a dash of the Continong:

APPARTENANT À L'ÉTAT

. . . and in the yellow light
barring the floor
eyes hurdling
blush-coloured flesh;
thirst whispered pool,
and yellow turned to crome;
Of Poringland
The oak
uprose. . .
Old Crome! Old Crome!
That light, that tree,
Those bathers. . .
Thirst. . .

This is obviously an expression of acute nostalgia on the part of an exiled Briton with a rather nice taste in painting. It absolutely gets me. As to where he is when he is thinking all this,—oh, well, anybody can see that he's somewhere in Paris. I'm good, aren't I? Really I'm extremely good. Three arresting poems in,—let's see,—half an hour. And I actually feel no sense of exhaustion. No, I do assure you. In fact, I'm feeling better. And just then a splendid line boomed into my head. Listen, —oh, it's a knockout,—"I smell your gas-range fears". So, let's go. I think it must be from the poem called:

APSTLY

You nudge a cornice for I could not
pursue that quenching posture if
the curdled wheat
ate into blonde exuberance
but no
no blaze of silver burnish. From the door
I smell your gas-range fears. . . .

This is a bit more difficult, but as some critic has said, I "focus on the consequences of the state of mind." In the first place, it's quite apparent that I am walking along with some one with an inferiority complex. Who should it chance to be but Bill Apstly? He is always overcome when he sees a policeman; perhaps because he once lived up the river. So I note him crowding up against a building rather abjectly, and admit that nothing could make me do the same, even if—well, here we have to go back a bit in my history. I hail from Kansas. I ran a threshing machine out there all one summer. Apstly came to work on the same farm. I am a heavy man, of about two hundred pounds, with rather bright yellow hair. When I say "curdled" of the wheat, it is an expression of dislike, just as much so as if I said "that damned wheat," —only more poetic. So now you begin to get it. Even if work in a wheatfield had destroyed my fine physique I wouldn't go around like a scared jackrabbit. That's what I mean to say. But poor old Apstly shows "no blaze of silver burnish," i.e.: courage. No, there he is, cowering in the doorway at the mere sight of a policeman. He exudes terror like a poisonous odor of gas. See? What? Why couldn't I have told my story more directly? Good heavens, my dear person, this is *poetry!*

But that's a pretty good story about Apstly and myself, isn't it? I could work it up, with a bit more plot, maybe, and sell it to a magazine. No, when I called the poem "Apstly," I didn't know about Bill then. But I do now!

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

(*To be continued*).

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A Painter of Iowa

THE BONNEY FAMILY. By RUTH SUCKOW. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1928. $2.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

WHAT is Iowa? One of the purest land-holding communities on the face of the globe; a State of 200,000 farms; a region settled by Southerners, Yankees, and Germans, now merged into a uniform mass; a land of high literacy, diffused comfort, narrow vision, and drab plodding life; where nobody is poor, but the young aspire to cities far away and the retired farmers yearn for California; a State of mortgages, of movies, of lodges, of pervasive evangelism, of Fords, of mail-order catalogue, of prohibition, of Cummins and Brookhart. It has more telephones and eggs and autos and pure-bred hogs per capita than any other commonwealth; but a gibe by one of its sons, Ellis Parker Butler, about the comparative expenditures for manure and for literature indicates what many think of its spiritual expressions. Its largest centre, Des Moines, is a town of placid attractiveness, and it is full of idyllic nooks and picturesque streams; but it is one of the last States we associate with beauty.

Till recently it was a State without a voice. Today it has one of the best, because one of the truest, of all the literary voices of the Union. In three successive books Miss Ruth Suckow has established her position as a painter of Iowa life. Her "Country People," with its finely restrained picture of the Kaetterhenrys, adding acre to acre with dumb acquisitiveness; her "Odyssey of a Nice Girl," a study of village morticians and auto-salesmen and the girl who gave up her attempt to escape; her short stories in "Iowa Interiors"—these are among the most authentic and veracious of all records of Middle Western life. To them she has now added a fourth, worthy of its predecessors—"The Bonney Family."

What we find admirable in Miss Suckow's art are just those qualities which to many spoiled readers of our overspiced and overwritten American fiction would seem defects. Her books lack hard and vigorous coloring; they are empty of sensation; they deal with the inner springs of personality and with emotion in highly reticent fashion. Hence the lament which we hear shortsighted critics occasionally raising over the lack of drama, of "passion beneath the surface," in Miss Suckow's work. It is because of her deep integrity of purpose, of her complete command of herself and her materials, that she gives us nothing of the sort. She deals with the everyday, commonplace people of one of the most commonplace, undistinguished parts of the world. Such people are largely plastic in the grip of circumstances—they are not, they cannot be, rebels, or they would cease to be typical; they seldom figure in dramatic situations; few feel passion, or feeling it, give it adequate expression. Yet they are real people, and it is Miss Suckow's triumph that her sober faithfulness, her patience, and her penetration enable us to see their reality and to become engrossed in them. By careful detail she builds up the routine of their lives, and by a multitude of delicate touches she reveals the warmth and tenacity of their small emotions, the hold which associations of place, family, and custom have upon them, the complexities and the changes in their characters. To those to whom Iowa life is wholly foreign, her detail may seem dry; to the vast majority of Americans it should be full of interest.

Here, as in "The Odyssey of a Nice Girl," Miss Suckow has gone to a small Iowa town. But whereas in the former book the attention was centered upon a maiden who roamed to Boston in a vain search for release and then came back to Iowa, here Miss Suckow makes an entire family the protagonist of the book, and keeps the scene constantly in Iowa. For twenty years the fortunes of the Bonney family are followed. The father is the faithful, warmhearted, but commonplace pastor of a village church, who gives up his pulpit and becomes an officer of a denominational college in order that his growing children may have the benefits of education. Of these children there are four, two boys and two girls. Especial attention is paid to their development through adolescence to womanhood and manhood; to their small sufferings and joys in academy and college, and to their first elations and defeats in life afterward. Particularly do Warren and Sarah occupy the author—Warren, tall, gawky, and red-haired, whose youth is an agony of embarrassment because his schoolmates laugh at him and he is ignored by the girls; Sarah, who longs for love and marriage and children, and who receives just one proposal from an impossible lout. Miss Suckow knows her young people. Take her picture of Warren squiring two homely girls to an unescapable party:

This family chronicle is not without its major events. Sarah's younger sister marries a soldier in 1917; her younger brother Wilfrid is killed in France; the mother of the family dies, and to the dismay of the children, the father is captured by an elderly spinster. But it is not the major events which count in the unfolding of character and in the human relationships of the people; it is the everyday details. In the end Sarah is left solitary, her father, her sister, and her surviving brother all married. We take leave of her groping blindly and painfully for some occupation in Chicago, and reflecting bitterly how life just "went on" for most of the people about her, how impossible it was to "make everything come out right." She, like the nice girl of the odyssey, finds at the end nothing but—frustration. The family has broken to pieces and separated to form new family units, and she, whose instincts marked her for a mother and wife, is left to face a sterile loneliness. Yet Miss Suckow makes no artificial climax of Sarah's fate; the ending of the book is narrated in the same even, passionless manner as all that has gone before. The emphasis upon the events throughout is as great as, and no greater than, the emphasis of life itself.

To those who do not care for the quiet, minute art of the Dutch *genre* painters or for its counterpart in literature, Miss Suckow's books will have little attraction; but in her own style and field she has produced work that will assuredly live.

Andalusian Witchery

THE GYPSY. By W. B. TRITES. New York. Frederick A. Stokes Company. 1928. $2.

Reviewed by BERNARDINE KIELTY SCHERMAN

HERE is a story which the writer seemingly had to tell. Indeed it is his emotional fervor burning through it, that sets "The Gypsy" so far apart from the general run of present-day contrived plots and deliberate subtleties, as to startle the reader by its naked simplicity. It is the story of a weak man whose gradual disintegration of mind and soul brings him to the point of sacrificing for a sordid, unrequited passion, the only creature in the world who means anything to him —the story of an artist under the spell of a gypsy model, against a background of listless, disinterested, lazy Spain. Material that has been done and redone a hundred times! Yet here is an author telling it with all the emotion of glorious discovery. His is not a concocted tale thrown off between jobs, but a creation achieved by skill and careful artifice. He has searched his mind for the most gripping word, cast out all unessentials, yet remained ardent, fired with feeling, to the very end. The tragedy is inevitable. One lays down the book and pauses long.

The tale is in novelette form which of course contributes much to its breathlessness. It reads like a short story, poignant and highly-keyed, yet with ample room for complete revelation of characters. Mallock's killing despair goes on as steadily and irrevocably as any work of nature, and Julia, his wife, so easy to sentimentalize, emerges as a singularly beautiful conception of a plain woman of the north trying in vain to make her own unromantic *milieu* amidst "the white incandescence of an Andalusian summer." It is the author's hot conviction in depicting his people that makes these old stock figures of melodrama live once more.

Weighed against all this truth and sincerity, however, is a naïveté that may easily offend the sophisticated reader. For all its bold outline, there is a lushness in the immediate writing quite Victorian. There is what seems to be almost a school boy's love of words. "In his fashionably cut gray flannels, lean, ruddy, elegant, he gave himself up to musing . . . ." "Her hair fell over her shoulders in abundant superb adulations. . . ." Some parts read like magazine twaddle. The author constantly insults by explaining foreign phrases, by pedantically describing foreign customs, worst of all, by taking three full pages out of his own short tale to retell the story of Gauguin as something quite new. Yet why should we let present day subtleties of expression and accepted reticences be our criterion in judging this book when the writer achieves his end by the very faults we quarrel with? "The Gypsy" may have the obviousness of the old style, but it is a style perfectly adapted, not so much to the story itself, as to the "feel" of the story. And when the reader has finished—when he looks back in retrospect, he finds that all the lushness of even those first pages has become merely thick brush strokes intensifying the picture. "The Gypsy" remains in his mind—vivid, unforgettable portraiture.

I Corinthians VIII: 13

MEAT. By WILBUR DANIEL STEELE. New York. Harper & Brothers. 1928. $2.50.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

IT is obvious that "Meat" will not prove palatable to the vegetarian reader, but it is doubtful if he can resist nibbling at the forbidden fare: for this third novel of Wilbur Daniel Steele has the tremendous allure of the debatable. One has only to recall the editorials, the articles, the public and private debates, the indignation and moral fervor resulting from the Bollinger Baby controversy which raged in Chicago at the turn of the century, to realize that Mr. Steele has indeed pitched his tent between the battle lines and that verbal blood is bound to be spilled. Social psychology has changed considerably since the doctor in Chicago asserted the right of humanity to destroy at birth the human offspring whose organism precludes any possibility of normal human life, yet the feeling for the inviolability of the human ego is still strong in the sons of men. It is not, with "Meat," save for a racked moment early in the story, the crude question of life for the unfit, but the much more subtle one of how much of life shall be taken from the fit to minister to the survival of the weakest.

The story proper opens on a shimmering midsummer day, with the India family on the New England beach of the India home. The two year old "synthetic twins" are "washing around in the sea-suds all by themselves, gulping, screeching, blowing bubbles, and getting themselves tremendously spanked by combers eight inches high." The air vibrates with heat and light. The parents, Sam and Anne India, lie further up the sands,—Sam who is of the fifth generation of Connecticut Indias, and Anne Flagg India, the colorful and vital pagan "sprung from earth to dare traffic with gods," who this very afternoon sends back to a woman complaining of the starkness of the twins her gay brave message with its unsuspected irony, "Tell her that God and I are sorry, but the world was made for well people to live in, first of all." The afternoon ends in an ecstasy of relief and release with the news of Tomlin Flagg's death. This cousin of Anne's had been born—and was not the first in the Flagg family to be so born—with a tiny horn above his left ear. The horn had disappeared in babyhood, but ugly appetites and incapacities had lingered, threatening. Now that's all done with, "ended," Anne says

* * *

How little it was ended they were to learn within the year. Anne gives birth to a son with a tiny horn over his left ear. The rest of the book tells a merciless story of corroding sacrifice. Anne, not gradually, but instantly in the second of realization, denies all her old gods, forfeits joy and straight thinking, and demands from her household the same warped immolation on the altar of the unfit. That desires which cannot be controlled may never be aroused, beauty must be banished and innocence destroyed. There is no appealing to the old Anne, because she is not there, only this hard-faced, opaque-eyed mother of a misbegotten. Ruthlessly the gracious, temperate home life is destroyed, the twins are driven to unfertile pastures, and Sam India becomes a thwarted stranger in his own house.

The disintegration of a kindly, love-encompassed family is splendidly achieved, but a last minute attempt to rebind the broken and changed members —even to so slight a degree as Mr. Steele does attempt it—is much less successful. The lyrical opening of the book, the ominous suggestion that hangs over the delicate fantasy of childhood, and the explicit horror of the main part are all boldly and definitely projected, but when the ending is approached a wavering becomes apparent. It is doubly difficult to understand why the novels of Mr. Steele should have this unsatisfactory quality in their endings, since in his short stories he is past master of crisp terminal technique. As to the authenticity of the scientific implications in the book I suppose we shall have to wait until the Doctor Looks at Meat.

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The Bowling Green

Granules from An Hour-Glass

THERE is no more learned and gracious group of scholars anywhere in the world than the professors of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore; and gossipping (humbly, as befits a journalist) with some of these gentlemen lately I was pleased to note that without exception, whether in the faculties of science, medicine, arts or philosophy, they are in their easier hours devotees of the det ctive story. One specially eminent doctor, whose name if I mentioned it would be familiar to every man of medicine, was kind enough to show me a list of detective fictions which he was carrying about because they had been recommended to him as *tête de cuvée*. He said the list had been written down for him by a mysterious Englishman whom he had met in Norway; they had spent an evening exchanging opinions on their favorite recreation. The name of this wandering Briton he did not know or had forgotten; but the list itself struck me as so interesting, both in the titles it names, its comments on them, and the penmanship of the hand that wrote it, that I asked permission to print it.

LIST OF FAVORED DETECTIVE STORIES COMPILED BY AN UNIDENTIFIED BRITON FOUND WANDERING IN NORWAY, AND GIVEN BY HIM TO AN AMERICAN PROFESSOR.

FREEMAN WILLS CROFT
- The Cask (very good).
- The Ponson Case (very good).
- Inspector French's Greatest Case (quite good).
- The Groote Park Mystery (or "Murder," I forget the exact wording). (Fairly good, most exciting, but a little episodic, and not very economic in construction.)

G. D. H. COLE
- The Brooklyn Murders (quite good).
- The Death of a Millionaire (very good). (In collaboration with Margaret Cole.)

R. A. V. MORRIS (I am not sure of the initials.)
- The Littleton Case (I am not sure whether it may not be spelt with a "y" instead of an "i"). (Distinctly good.)

N.B. All the above mentioned stories are of the "dry" type and are to be recommended to the connoisseur.

AGATHA CHRISTIE
- The Mysterious Affair at Styles.
- The Murder on the Links.
- (Both distinctly good but not *quite* pure in type: they are a *little* too "human," a little too intricate and the detective, though a charming person, is a little too mannered for the pure style; but they really are good.)

AUSTIN FREEMAN
- The Eye of Osiris.
- The Red Thumb Mark.
- (These and several others of this author's stories are good; science tends, however, to be applied to the detection of crime with a somewhat facile sensationalism, though neither ignorantly nor unintelligently: the solution may suggest itself too early to the reader who is much versed in the technique of this sort of writing: there is too much love-making: the stories are, however, very much to be recommended.)

VALENTINE WILLIAMS
- The Orange Divan. (A good and intelligent mystery story by one whose other stories are merely vulgarly sensational: this story is too passionate and "colored" to be of the "pure" type, but can well be recommended.)

(I have arranged the authors in what I consider to be their order of merit.)

READ ALSO:

Dr. Montague James.
- Ghost Stories of an Antiquary.
- More Ghost Stories of an Antiquary.
- A Thin Ghost.
- A Warning to the Curious.

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That is, as you will observe, a distinctly idiosyncratic list. I confess with pleasure (since it means I still have them before me) that I have never read any of Mr. Croft's yarns. I have done a little careful scrutiny of the handwriting of the memorandum, which reminds me much of the notable script of Mr. Stanley Morison, the famous English typographer. I wonder if it could possibly be he? Speaking of handwriting, in which every student of detection is interested, the Society for Pure English, that very learned body, has been taking it up in a serious way and I hope to oblige you soon with an extract from their bulletin on the subject of character as betrayed by the pen.

In Baltimore I not only had the pleasure of discussing detective stories with those who read them most critically, but also of a day's superb expedition with one who writes them. The mystery story is only one side of Hulbert Footner's talent, but a very consoling one to me: I find his Madame Storey (a woman sleuth) one of the most original and believable of recent creations in that field. Mr. Footner drove me down to Charlesgift, his beautiful old seventeenth-century manor on the Patuxent River. It is an eighty-mile drive, and most of the way we argued possible new angles for a crime he is fictionally planning. The old house was closed for the winter, but we built a roaring fire in one of the huge brick chimneys, boiled our hot dogs, ate roquefort cheese and damson jam, and continued to discuss new ways of murder and mystification. As the cold winter afternoon waned in that fine old panelled room I might have grown uneasy were it not that Mr. Footner is so old a friend: for in his eye was the vivacity of the connoisseur: we were far away from other habitation: and, as Stevenson once thought "For the making of a story here were fine conditions." I must admit that I also have sometimes thought secretly of somehow or other leaving a crime, so to speak, on Mr. Footner's doorstep, to see how the expert would deal with it.

In his yarns about Madame Storey, Mr. Footner has always left her youth rather mysterious. I want him to do us a tale telling how she first got into the detective business.

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I must have passed Quinn and Boden's big printing shop in Rahway, N. J., several score of times, and always keep an eye open for it from the western side of the P. R. R. smoker. But only the other day I noticed that they have started a new way of giving a little free advertising to recent books that have been printed there. On a big sign that overlooks the railway you will see a number of titles as the express flashes by. It says something like this: DUSTY ANSWER REBELLION GEORGE WASHINGTON WHATEVER WE DO MOTHER INDIA.

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A. W. P. is a collector of old railroading prints. I called his attention to a little essay by J. C. Squire called "Railroadiana," and he replied in a way that stirs the heart of a lover of locomotives:

No. 3, "The Progress," the first ten wheeler on the A. & W. P., came rolling fifteen flats, loaded heavy with green lumber, down the long hill to the junction with the main line. Suddenly her steam brake went on hard and her shrill whistle gave an imperative shriek. The fireman scurried over the cord wood in the tender to the hand brake on the first car. The three brakemen ran from one brake to another and yanked them on, prying the brake wheels around with their sticks.

Before they had all the brakes tight the cars kept bumping and pushing the reluctant "Progress." Then she came to a halt and the engineer wiped the sweat from his forehead and climbed down out of the cab to take a chunk off the track.

The brakemen on that train, and every boy within a mile or two, when Jake Adams blew "brakes" that day knew something was wrong. For every boy knew the whistle of every engine, and the touch of every engineer. And we knew what every engine could do. If No. 12 came in with twelve loaded cars we hung around to find out how she had made the Linden hill. And we knew the geography of the freight system of the United States. O. R. & N. we knew was the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company and A. & W. P., Atlanta and West Point.

And we watched "the vestibule" come rolling in in the evening as the Salem boys watched for clipper ships. There was romance in railroading those days; danger, skill, wrecks.

No Chris; Squire is wrong about railroadiana. The collectors of it are not collecting values, they are recreating their youth. If I had a picture of the old John Winder with six cars of lumber puffing out of the siding at Linden, it would be as beautiful to me as the most famous barque to the men of Bristol. And as there is no such picture, I take what I can get—Currier and Ives and the Union Pacific advertising lithograph.

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A client in Chicago writes of Mary Adams (see B. G. of Feb. 18):

I remember her from childhood for her extreme and frail smallness, for the electric flashes from her steel spectacles, and for her boundless intellectual enthusiasm. My first memory of her was at the time of the Chicago "World's Fair" when the present Art Institute was used as the meeting place for a "World's Congress of Religions." Miss Adams was an indefatigable attender, much impressed with those quasi-fakir Indians who are epidemic in this country from time to time. I remember her speaking of one Swami whose name I have long forgot—"a bronze Apollo!" she cried, and the spectacles blazed. I didn't understand, but I was awestruck by her fervour.

My mother (for whom she had doubtless made my own second day suit) always called on her once or twice a year to learn how she fared and I recall her telling me only a few months ago of the amazing, though Spartan, sufficiency and neatness of Miss Adams's habitat.

Just a brightly burning enthusiasm attached to practically no body at all, transcendental to her energetic fingertips. It would be well if there were more such . . . . and to read of her in your denatured Bowling Green! After all, as they say, the world is not so hopeless a place as one sometimes thinks.

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Putting away books on some new shelves a passage in James Harvey Robinson's "Ordeal of Civilization" caught my eye:

Human possibilities have expanded beyond belief, and man himself, as well as his heaven and earth, has little resemblance to the pictures of him which have been furnished by his moral guides. Is not the moral overrating of the past our besetting danger? We have the great task before us of gradually replacing archaic aspirations, abhorrences, tastes, and scruples by others which shall conform more closely to the actual facts as now understood.

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It has not been forgotten, I hope, that in his admirable work "The Almost Perfect State" (a book that contains some fine thinking and some strong midriffian humor) Mr. Don Marquis repeatedly ejaculates that there will be no beans in the Almost Perfect State. The preoccupation of philosophers, statesmen and divines with the Bean has always caught the eye of the reader. So I was specially pleased when, in the Tudor and Stuart Club at Johns Hopkins University, I found in Sir William Osler's copy of Fuller's *Worthies* (1662):

I read a Latine Proverb, A fabis abstineto, Forebear beans; whereof some make a civil interpretation, *meddle not with matters of State*, because anciently men cast in a Bean, when they gave their Suffrages in publick elections; others expound it physically, because Beans are windy and discompose the tranquillity of men's minds, by their flatuous evaporation; the reason assigned for the general report that Pythagoras prohibited the eating of them to his Scholars.

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There is a very consistent logic in the building of a book. Take the matter of shape. The size and style of the type having been decided upon, it was found by repeated tests that five and one-sixth inches was the maximum width of setting at which it could be read without the eye "slipping" to the next line or being strained in the effort not to. From the width of the type naturally followed the width of the page; from that the sense of proportion deduced the appropriate height. The result is a page 7¾x12 inches—a page so charming that it may well set a fashion for fine editions.

The above is from an old circular of the Nonesuch Press issued (1924) when they were preparing their edition of the Bible. The problem of book-sizes is entirely relative, and depends on the nature of the book and the purpose for which it is intended. But I am bound to say that to my taste most "fine editions" are much too large. This is due to the fact that Bulk is a word of fetich in the trade.

My own favorite proportions for a book are what I call the Rogers Peet norm, as they are based on the size of pockets supplied by those admirable garmenteers. After long argument I persuaded a publisher to apply my chosen measurements to a set of books in which I was interested. The full size of the page is 4¾x6⅝. The type-page (not counting running heads) is 3x4⅜. The over-all size of the bound book is 5x6¾. I think that a perfect proportion for a book that one really wants people to read. But many booksellers complained that these volumes were too small.

The pockets that English tailors put in their jackets are larger than American pockets. Yet, oddly enough, British publishers are more inclined than ours to the small book. When in England my ideas on book-sizes are influenced by Mr. Herbert Chappell, the enterprising tailor on Kingsway.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

There is to be sold at Sotheby's in London at the end of this month a batch of books from the Holford Library in Dorchester House, among which is one of the three copies in existence of "Robinson Crusoe" in serial form. The popularity of this work was such that a few months after its publication the *Original London Post*, which was issued thrice weekly, determined to serialize it. It ran for a year, averaging a page and a half a day, and was probably the first serial in a strict sense to have been published in a London paper.

Two new volumes have been added to those already so numerous on the literature of France. They are "Historie de la Littérature et de la Pensée Françaises Contemporaines" (Paris: Larousse), by Daniel Mornet, and "La Littérature Française" (Paris: Colin), by André Billy. The stress of M. Billy's work is on the artistic aspects of his subject, and that of M. Mornet's on the ideas that underlie them.

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Books of Special Interest

A Poet of the South

SEA-DRINKING CITIES. By JOSEPHINE PINCKNEY. New York: Harper & Bros. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

THERE is a delightful freshness of language in Miss Pinckney's poetry. Note:

Poised like those tall tugging ships,
Their rigging twanging in the rain.

The atmosphere of her native South is caught vividly in dexterous language. She paints in words with the sure touch of the articulate artist.

She has a knack for titles and a delicate knack for evocative phrase. Her lines are slimly firm and supple. It is principally a scene that she limns, a character that she describes; but her private remarks upon life also display personality.

Here is one of the new poets of the South who takes immediate station with their best. Miss Pinckney deserves to stand beside Beatrice Ravenel. This, her first book of poems, is an unquestionable success. It has variety and vivacity, but, best of all, clean workmanship. We quote

GALAXY ON A WINDOW-PANE

The rain darts earth-ward, scattering on the pane,
And afterward the hard sun-daggers strike,
Shattering the gray rain,—piercing the brittle drops
That splinter into little constellations,
Fire-pointed ochre, fading into green
That melts to blue and purple, pales to rose,—
A clutter of comets trailing quick gradations
Of aquamarine and ultramarine.
Million-pointed stars hang in the sky
Of cloud-blue glass, until the incessant daggers
Worn bright from ancient duels, destroy the Galaxy.

A Political Novel

THE WALL OF GLASS. By AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS. New York. George H. Doran. 1927.

Reviewed by JACK CRAWFORD.

THIS is a novel on the subject of post-war politics in England by Mrs. Williams-Ellis, daughter of the late journalist and political writer, John St. Loe Strachey. The author comes of a family who take their politics hard, and she has inherited the tradition.

Mrs. Williams-Ellis shows by the quotation from "Tristram Shandy" prefixed to her book that politically she is an idealist and that she believes the present system makes a "vile, dirty planet," except for those born "to a great title or a great estate." She is therefore annoyed at the attitude of professionals towards politics, who are frank in facing its problems with a disillusioned mixture of expediency and opportunism, and she prefers the idealism of the amateurs, who, like all amateurs, have unbounded enthusiasm and a definite plan so logical that it ought to work if everyone would only believe in it. One hesitates to name her favorite amateurs for fear of being accused of making a brief review of a novel a medium for political controversy.

Her method of dealing with the matter of her story seemed confusing to at least one reader. She presents at first a series of sharply etched vignettes chosen from various social and political groups, one after the other, leaving the reader to wonder what the connection is to be, and burdening his memory with an extraordinary number of characters and names. One has to keep reading forward and backward in order to recognize a reappearing person, unless of course the reader has had his memory trained by one of the fifteen-minute-a-day systems.

Besides this merry game of hide-and-seek with one's memory in a substantial section of the London telephone-book, Mrs. Williams-Ellis introduces under an assumed name every political leader of any importance, and some of not so much significance, in the England of to-day.

After treading this maze of identifications, the reader is taken to see an example of government by week-end at a country-house, and one infers the author does not approve of this way of conducting the affairs of the Empire. Perhaps she has forgotten that when the week-end is over the House of Commons is waiting with a long list of questions on the Monday, so that the system is not so arbitrary as it sounds.

Finally, Mrs. Williams-Ellis swings into what seems to be the main purpose of her novel, a minute and prolonged description of working to elect a Labor candidate in an industrial constituency in the north. There is a strong dash or two of the bitters and some of the sweets of sex; the tragic death of a Glasgow member of the party; an excellent picture of an old stalwart who began with William Morris; of the modern intellectual from the 'varsity who is in the Labor party; and at the end—a brief picture of defeat. The author closes upon a discouraged note, for as was said at the outset, she takes her politics hard. To a less passionate reader there is the consoling reflection that after all there are other general elections to come.

In Black and White

GEORGE W. BELLOWS: His Lithographs. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927. $15.

Reviewed by FRANK J. MATHER.

WITHIN a businesslike linen duck cover pleasantly resembling that of a Coast Pilot (it would have pleased Bellows) we have a scrupulously made album containing the artist's entire work in lithography excellently reproduced. Bellows's strong point was never color, and since the lithographs are often copies or variants of his pictures, they give a fairly adequate notion of his copious and always vigorous lifework. Thomas Beer, who writes an intimate and enthusiastic biographical introduction, is evidently ready to rest this case on the lithographs. Indeed the present movement of opinion concerning Bellows is that being just a good painter he was a very great artist in black and white.

Feeling deeply the power, gusto, and documentary value of these prints, we would gladly evade the issue of greatness. It is certain that the future historian will find rich material in Bellows's genial and often slightly satirical interpretations of the prize ring, the crowded slum, the city playground, the wistfully rebellious artist, the self-important critic. That is, Bellows is sure to have the fame that properly goes to any artist who grasps the raciness and variety of the life about him and sets it down clearly and truthfully. But that is something quite different from being remembered as a great artist—the difference between a John Leech and a Charles Keene.

It would be hazardous to predict the greater survival for George Bellows. Reviewing very carefully these nearly two hundred sheets, most of which we have repeatedly studied in the originals, they seem to show, as was to be expected, precisely the qualities and defects of the paintings. These qualities of sympathy, energy, and general truthfulness are obvious and need no emphasis. The defects are a little less obvious, resting perhaps on a certain incurable bluntness of vision and a consequent lack of respect for, at least a lack of delicate understanding of, the material employed. It was so with the paintings. Most vigorously expressed, they lacked painterlike quality, they were not felt through in color. One need only compare the best of them with a similar theme by John Sloan or Guy Pène du Bois to realize the difference between fine painting and its absence. And the case is identical with the lithographs. They lack finesse. The blacks are habitually forced without obtaining quality. Those middle tones which make or mar a lithograph are approximate and even timid. When the artist has said his deepest black he has said everything he really has to say and has not related it to the rest. In the entire collection we find just one sheet in which a fine and thoughtful design has enlisted all the resources of the lithographic stone. It is number 145, Base Hospital. Introducing John L. Sullivan is hardly less perfect and is the print many would choose as a consummate expression of Bellows's peculiar personal gift. A really fastidious amateur of lithography would, we feel, be reluctant to keep any of the Bellowses save these two within speaking distance of his Daumiers.

In short the lithographs tell somewhat more fully and abundantly what the paintings have already told—the story of a genuine and racy talent commanding inadequate resources of taste on the side of craftsmanship. Bellows was intelligent and self-critical enough to know his limitations and young enough presumably to have worked through them. Yet there may have been some hopeless handicap of too early success and over-confidence. One marvels that the mind that conceived and executed the Base Hospital could have been content with the rest.

Childbirth

By

WILLIAM G. LEE, M.D.

Dr. Lee was on the staff of Rush Medical College from 1905 until his death in 1927, at which time he was also Chief of the Obstetrical Staff at Cook County Hospital in Chicago.

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Foreign Literature

German Critics

KULTUR UND SPRACHE IM NEUEN ENGLAND. By HEINRICH SPIES. Leipzig: Teubner. 1927.

DER ENGLISCHE ROMAN DER NEUESTEN ZEIT UND GEGENWART. By ERNST VOWINCKEL. Berlin: F. A. Herbig. 1927.

PROBLEME DER ENGLISCHEN SPRACHE UND KULTUR. Edited by WOLFGANG KELLER. Heidelberg: Carl Winter. 1927.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL

IT would perhaps be wrong to speak of an outbreak of Anglomania in Germany during the past year or two, but there has certainly been a remarkable popularity of modern English literature. About a year ago Signor Pirandello looked like ousting the long-reigning Bernard Shaw, but the Irish dramatist soon reestablished his position. It is in the realm of fiction that we find the most notable examples. A glance at a number of recent publishers' lists is sufficient to establish the fact that English and American fiction is at present enjoying an exceptional vogue in Germany. Stevenson, Conrad, Galsworthy appearing in translation in complete form, or nearly so; James Joyce's "Ulysses" translated and his stories, "Dubliners," just announced as coming in on the flood-tide; D. H. Lawrence, Sherwood Anderson, "Blondinen Bevorzugt," and "Die Getreue Nymphe"; Edgar Wallace, Hugh Walpole—these are only a few of the names that strike the eye. Clearly Germany is making a handsome return for the "boom" in "Jew Süss" and Herr Ludwig's imaginative biographies.

Professor Spies's volume aims at giving a German reader the cultural and linguistic background of contemporary English literature. It is a rather academic work, with copious footnotes and references to learned publications. In fact, it is a work of reference in itself. Modern England, for this writer, is mainly distinguished by increased hurry, hence the cult of the short story, by the emancipation of women, hence the prominence of women-writers and the deliberate appeal of many novelists to what is imagined to be the feminine taste, and by a democratic "Nivellierung," hence, perhaps, certain undesirable things, but also a much-welcomed extension of interest in the English language, witnessed by such organizations as the Society for Pure English. In this last connection the writer has a number of out-of-the-way observations, as that the English "will to power" is betrayed by the use of "shall" and "will"—"I shall," "you will." It seems a point only an outside observer would make and as a sociological deduction may be compared with that of an acute mind—no less than Grabbe, by the way—who thought the English character expressed by the fact that he alone among the nations wrote the first person singular with a capital letter! From such academic frivolities, however, we pass to a series of chapters on neologisms, foreign influence, place-names, the linguistic influence of the Press. On the whole the writer here shows himself to be sound and well-informed, and in any case industrious. One interesting fact he brings out is the unexpectedly short life so many of the newly-coined war-words have had. "Camouflage" and "wangle" are perhaps the two chief survivors. Dr. Fowler's "Dictionary of Modern English Usage" was apparently published after Dr. Spies's work. Those who wish to extend the examples given in that delightful guide may be commended to the German book, with the caution that its author's idiomatic knowledge is not always equal to his erudition and industry.

The first thing about Dr. Vowinckel's work that will strike the reader is its extraordinary comprehensiveness. Clearly he is indebted to a number of previous historians of the modern English novel, to M. Abel Chevalley's "Le Roman Anglais de Notre Temps," to Professor Leon Kellner's "Englische Literatur der Neuesten Zeit," Dr. Schirmer's "Der Englische Roman der Neuesten Zeit," and Miss Elizabeth Drew's "The Modern Novel: Some Aspects of Contemporary Fiction." But he has gone beyond all these, first, in the remarkable range of works he has sutdied, second, in the care with which he has attempted a systematic classification of English fiction, from Meredith to James Joyce, from "Contarini Fleming" to the "Constant Nymph." He confesses at the outset to a certain embarrassment in his task. English fiction used to be a true reflection of English social life, *seine Hauptfunktion die Herstellung einer Selbstbewusstheit der Nation.* This is over; the realistic form, Dickens above all, is in dissolution. The English novel has lost its most characteristic note; the national type has gone and has given place to *einer breiten Humanität.* This generalization colors all the subsequent history. Intent, at all costs, on confining this so much more elusive thing, contemporary English fiction, the writer constructs not one cage, but a whole series. Into these he has chased, often, the most ill-sorted companions. In "Spannung zwischen Idealwelt und Realwelt," for example, we find Hawthorne, E. F. Benson, and Hall Caine; in "Okkulte Jenseitswelten," May Sinclair, Walter de la Mare, Clemence Dane, and Conan Doyle. The critic is not always so arbitrary. His account of the psychological impressionists, Henry James, Dorothy Richardson, and James Joyce, is excellent; his parallel between Galsworthy and Thomas Mann, Arnold Bennett and Clara Viebig, must be equally useful to German readers coming fresh to the English novel as to English readers with only slight knowledge of contemporary German fiction. In fact, we are not certain that this is not a better book for English readers altogether; it gives an original, because thoroughly un-English, view of the modern English novel. Germans may find it too bewilderingly complete and all-inclusive. They would be better advised to begin with something simpler, and above all to realize that Dickens was not the last sound word in English national fiction, nor is James Joyce an entirely representative writer.

A sounder guide to English national psychology is the essay of Professor Arnold Schroer in the volume "Probleme der Englischen Sprache und Kultur," a series of essays presented to the well-known professor of English at Heidelberg, Dr. Johannes Hoops, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday. It is an interesting application of the principles of Wundt's "Völkerpsychologie" to the English character, and has, incidentally, many sound general remarks on the relationship between race and nation and state. The common German idea of English "cant," isolation, narrow-mindedness, hypocrisy, Puritanism is here corrected with historical instances, and with deliberate avoidance of anything like a "system," the construction of which, the writer thinks, has produced much darkening of the German mind in regard to things English, and must be held responsible for the outbreak of "hate" and disillusion with which the English attitude to the war was greeted in Germany. Most of the other essays in the volume are of a specialist kind, as befits an academic *Festschrift.* Of more general interest is an essay on Richard the Lionheart, by Alexander Cartellieri, an account of the censorship of plays in England by Dr. Spies, an inquiry into the Indian sources of Longfellow's "Kavanagh," an admirable essay on English literature and social life at the beginning of the eighteenth century, by Professor Levin Schücking, and the collection of Lord Acton's letters about George Eliot, here published for the first time. There is also an effective little demonstration, by Dr. Walther Fischer, of the view, rejected by Skeat, that Chaucer's remark about his Prioress's French, "After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe," was really sarcastic. All these contributions may be pondered with profit by the English as well as the German reader.

Foreign Notes

ANDRÉ THÉRIVE'S latest novel, "Sans Ame" (Paris: Grasset), is the tale of a girl who makes an uphill fight for a livelihood, holding humble positions in various industries, and maintaining throughout her struggle an interest in things of the spirit.

A new comedy by Georg Kaiser, author of "From Morn to Midnight," was recently presented for the first time in Frankfurt. "Der Präsident," as it is entitled, is described as "the comedy of vanity and illusion—a comedy of our day." It has been published in book form by Kiepenhauer (Potsdam).

A volume of sketches in many veins and on many topics that has been achieving much popularity in Italy is General de Pinedo's "Il Mio Volo Attraverso l'Atlantico e le Due Americhe" (Milan: Hoepli). The pioneer of hydroplane travelling writes in genial mood, and discourses gracefully of small things.

André Maurois has written a charming and clever little book on the art of conversation. "Notes et Maximes. La Conversation" (Paris: Hatchette) is an amusing and ingenious discussion, the field of which, however, is limited to the conversation of the fashionable and intellectual classes.

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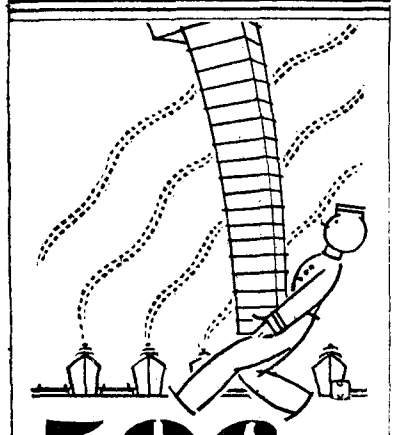

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Points of View

Lessing, Modernist

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

I have just read with perfect interest Mr. Fosdick's recent review in your journal of Mr. Huxley's "Religion without Revelation." I am anything but a specialist in the field concerned; nor have I ever read anything by Mr. Huxley, and not much by Mr. Fosdick. What impresses me, however, despite this acute limitation, is that all that was contained in the review, and hinted at in the book reviewed, was said by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, who was the first real modernist, and who died in 1781. Since Lessing was born on January 22, 1729, the world will have the unusual privilege of celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of his birth in less than a year from now. It will be an unwholesome pity, if not an actual reflection upon contemporary civilization, if this anniversary is allowed to pass unobserved and unrespected.

Lessing had what would now be called a single-track mind. That is, he had but one idea: All men are created free and equal. When twelve years of age he wrote an essay in which he showed that it is preposterous to speak of some people as "barbarians," God having made all men. This thought he never abandoned, whether he was writing on the similarity of centuries or the education of the human race, "Nathan the Wise," or "Dialogues for Free Masons." He fought as gallant a fight as was ever waged by anyone for intelligent tolerance; he died at the same age as Shakespeare, having advanced the spiritual life of his people—of all peoples who will listen—by several centuries. He was the first critic after Spinoza to show that since Christianity got along for about eight centuries without the Bible, to criticize the Bible is not necessarily to criticize Christianity; he was the first dramatist to show that a man's religion, politics, nationality, even his parents, character, and ability are "irrational" appurtenances, all being given man, or even forced upon him.

If the discussions regarding these topics to-day are valid, to go back to Lessing's birthday in 1729 is to go forward.

ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD
Morgantown, W. Va.

Mr. Preston Replies

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

I should like to remind Mr. Foster Damon, who takes issue with me in *The Saturday Review* for being "baffled" by Cummings's "Him," that I did not ask at all, as he says I did, for any "suggestions" as to the "possible significance" of the play. What I did ask for in my review were "suggestions as to the possible significance" of a ridiculous and mouthy paragraph which I quoted from the text. But this he passes over, as if it did not exist. If he cannot explain it, well and good; neither can I. But if he can, I beg that he do so, since it would make most amusing reading.

I think I understood quite clearly what Cummings intended to do; and it is not terribly vital that Mr. Damon should tell me all about the struggle between man's flesh and his soul, or his "Persona" and his "Anima." After all, the struggle is not a new one, nor does Cummings's idea of it contribute anything important—save for a few extremely witty comments. As a matter of fact, it appears to me that by far the most interesting struggle in this play is that which takes place between Cummings's really extraordinary natural talents, which somehow always crop out to show him at his best *malgré lui*, and that other side of his nature—the side of pose and clever, pointless affectation—which he seems to feel obliged to cultivate in order to please the *Dial* and the "arty" people who see life only through the studio window (with its northern exposure), and others like Mr. Foster Damon who are so serenely gifted with the faculty of making a great deal of something out of a great deal of nothing together with a little of an undefinable half-way.

A admitted that Cummings has unusual talents, and I have thought so for a long time and I still think so. Indeed, I am more than ready to say that I consider some of his poetry to be a part of that rare and precious heritage in verse that will endure beyond brass and stone. I would put things from "Orientale" and three or four of the sonnets on a plane with all that is fine and genuine in English literature. But I am also compelled to say that I consider about seventy-five per cent of his work to be the sad result of Cummings's fear of ever sincerely debunking himself, face to face with himself. And I see in "Him," amid the very occasional but dazzlingly brilliant flashes of his old genius, a rapidly diminishing hold upon reality and the technique to establish his individual viewpoint as anything vitally interesting. My quarrel is not with what Cummings sets out to do; my quarrel is simply with the fact that when he inadequately does what he sets out to do, he glosses it over with eccentricity and calls it ultra-modern art.

Cummings has the praiseworthy desire to deal with fundamental things; but his treatment of them is so confoundingly superficial that in the end they appear only as silly surfaces. There were magnificent possibilities in "Him," and but for Cummings's conceit and West 13th Street pose, the thing might have developed into a piece of stupendous drama. As it was, he was obliged to be clever and "naughty" (whereby he succeeded best in being perversely vulgar, after the manner of a particular Fifth Avenue restaurant on Saturday night). Now, if Cummings were to seriously rewrite "Him," unifying the thing and making it intelligible, it might be a valuable service to American letters; certainly it would be of value to Cummings.

When I spoke in the review of Cummings's having had at one time "the promise of an American Keats," I meant simply that he apparently had the chance in his old Harvard days of sometime occupying a place in American poetry of the quality and type that Keats holds, and will always hold, in English poetry. Why Mr. Damon should imagine that I was begging Cummings to go ahead imitating Keats (as he once did), is quite beyond me. The presumption seems a trifle forced and just a little stupid on his part, if I may say so. Perhaps he was trying to squeeze in a hint that Cummings has genius quite as well as Keats had it? Well, yes, it looked so at one time, certainly. And the pity of the whole tragic affair is that Cummings, with the help of the Greenwich Village atmosphere and enthusiastic *Dialists*, has hoodwinked himself into believing that he is outrageous and purple-colored modernity itself; whereas none of these persons is modern, Cummings least of all. Because being modern is being something fairly definite, and no one can be even fairly definite without being intelligible.

JOHN HYDE PRESTON.
New York.

A Rap for a Reviewer

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

I've just read, in your issue of January 28th, a review of my last book, "A Vagabond in Fiji," by an anonymous reviewer who apparently does not regard it as a masterpiece.

This estimate of its worth, even from an unbiased authority, is quite pardonable, and may quite possibly be correct. There are moments in my own contemplative reflection when I could say much worse things about my books than any reviewer has ever said. I can take specfic exception in the present case only to the fact that your reviewer, in her first paragraph, rather slammed my volume as being "padded with comment on Fiji in other days" and then —rather in contradiction—slammed it in her last for my "inadequate remarks on the history of the different islands."

I'm not in the habit of writing to editors or reviewers. In general, they have been altogether *too* kind—even to the extent of quoting the jacket-blurb in place of criticism, or pronouncing my work excellent (and then, in summarizing it, proving conclusively that they haven't read it). Your reviewer seems honestly to have done her work (or is she a he?) and to have given a sincere, if unfavorable opinion. Yet her contradictions suggest to me a possible bias, which inspires this letter. And my text might be stated in the question:

Who *are* reviewers?

I feel very thankful that most reviewers are both intelligent and fair, although seldom inclined toward industry. But now or then I've met the other sort. One of my books, on the Orient, was unmercifully soaked by a lady who had visited the same places I had, and who (as I later learned) tried unsuccessfully to sell her own book to the publishers. Another volume, on Mexico (and incidentally containing a few unpleasant comments on Obregon, who was then president) was similarly soaked in a New York newspaper by a lady who (although she undoubtedly was a good authority on Mexico) happened to be the private secretary of General Obregon.

Such occurrences are never the fault of an editor. It is to his credit, in the case of a travel-book, that he tries, whenever possible, to give it to a reviewer who knows something of the territory which it covers. Yet the person who has been there is frequently the one most subject to a biased slant. And it seems to me—although the idea is probably impracticable—that both the author and the readers deserve to know something of the reviewer.

In the present case, the one who criticized my book in your columns evidently has traveled my course as far as Tutuila, in American Samoa. But in what capacity? Is she a missionary, who might resent—although she takes pains not to mention them—my comments on South Sea missionaries? Or—and this is a question that every literary editor *ought* to ask of his reviewers, but never does—has she at some time tried to sell manuscripts about this territory?

(I suppose you know as well as as I do that nine out of every ten of your reviewers are those who've failed at the business of writing.)

I'm sure my suggestion *is* impracticable, but I can't see that literary criticism will ever be of any value—either to writers or readers—until the critics are named and described, until their personal tastes are made known to the public, and until their basis of criticism is as honestly advertised as is the bias from which most of us authors write.

In conclusion, please allow me to reiterate the thought that my book might well be condemned by the most *un*biased and gifted of critics. And let me thank you for the attention you gave it. I simply start this discussion because I've felt for a long time, and very earnestly, that (in kindness to authors, and in justice to the public), the bias of all critics *should* be revealed. One *should* know what they ordinarily do like or dislike before reading their comment on a new book. And under present editorial policies, wherein the voice of the reviewer is the Voice of God, one never knows whether he's reading the opinion of a College Professor, a girl just graduated from Vassar, or a fellow-writer with a bone to pick.

What do you think about it? Whether you wish to quote me or not, I think this subject worthy of your consideration.

Hollis, N. Y. HARRY L. FOSTER.

The Cock Tavern

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

In a recent issue of the *Review* appeared a sonnet by Leonard Bacon "written at the Cock Tavern, in the fly leaf of a book of Verse."

The old Cock Tavern in Fleet Street of Tennyson's time was pulled down some sixty years ago, and the gilt Cock that stood over the narrow entrance a few doors east of Temple Bar, and the "plump headwaiter" went for ever in the early sixties. It frequented this old Tavern many times for my steak and chop, with the half pint of port, or maybe it was cherry or ale, viands and liquor to be treasured in one's memory.

Did Mr. Bacon write this sonnet at the old Cock, or at the present time, at some new Tavern, called the Cock and arrogating to itself all the traditions of the Fleet Street bird?

It may be so, but I dare to say, that there is no "plump head waiter." There was only one and Tennyson claims him for his own. When and where was the sonnet written? Will you enlighten me?

A. H. HEWARD

Mr. Bacon Replies

To the Editor of The Saturday Review:
SIR:

Forty years is as far back as I can go. Therefore it is obvious that my sonnet was written under the auspices of the contemporary, modern, and meretricious Cock.

I have, Sir, the honor to remain your obliged and obedient servant

LEONARD BACON

The twelfth volume in General Palat's history entitled "La Grande Guerre sur le Front Occidental" has recently been published. "L'Année d'Angoisse 1917" (Paris: Berger-Levrault), as he calls it, is an interesting work and one that casts much light on some of the plans and operations of the year it surveys.

ERRATUM

By a regrettable oversight the review of K. Stanley-Brown's "Song-book of the American Spirit," which appeared in the Children's Bookshop of February 18, omitted mention of the publisher. The book is issued by Harper & Brothers.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

LONGFELLOW AND SPAIN. By *Iris Lilian Whitman.* New York Instituto de las Españas.

THE CICERONIAN STYLE IN FR. LUIS DE GRANADA. By *Rebecca Switzer.* New York Instituto de las Españas.

THE SAVOUR OF LIFE. By *Arnold Bennett.* Doubleday, Doran. $2.50 net.

ON TEN PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE. By *Stopford Brooke.* Oxford University Press. $2.50 net.

LYRIC PIONEERS OF MODERN GERMANY. By *Solomon Liptzin.* Columbia University Press. $2.75.

PROPER STUDIES. By *Aldous Huxley.* Doubleday, Doran. $2.50 net.

A HISTORY OF SPANISH LITERATURE. By *James Fitzmaurice Kelly.* Appleton. $1.

TOUR IN SCOTLAND, 1817. Notes while Preparing "Sketch Book," etc. By *Stanley Williams.* Yale University Press. 2 vols. $15.

THE THEORY OF IMAGINATION IN CLASSICAL AND MEDIAEVAL THOUGHT. By *Murray Wright Bundy.* University of Illinois Press.

THE BETTER COUNTRY. By *Dallas Lore Sharp.* Houghton Mifflin. $3.

Biography

RUFUS CHOATE, THE WIZARD OF THE LAW. By *Claude M. Fuess.* Minton, Balch. $3.50.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND. Open Court Publishing Co. $1.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND WALT WHITMAN. By *William E. Barton.* Bobbs-Merrill. $2.75.

PORTRAIT OF LADY MARY MONTAGU. By *Iris Barry.* Bobbs-Merrill. $5.

THE REMAKING OF AN AMERICAN. By *Elizabeth Banks.* Doubleday, Doran. $5.

HENRY HUDSON. By *Llewellyn Powys.* Harpers.

PERHAPS I AM. By *Edward Bok.* Scribners. $3.

WINSTON CHURCHILL. By *Ephesian.* McBride. $5 net.

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF KING GEORGE THE THIRD. Vol. III. Edited by Sir John Fortescue. Macmillan.

THE FOUR JAMES. By *William Arthur Deacon.* Graphic. $2.

SUNDRY GREAT GENTLEMEN. By *Marjorie Bowen.* Dodd, Mead. $4.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON. By *G. K. Chesterton.* Dodd, Mead. $2.

THE WOMEN WHO MAKE OUR NOVELS. By *Grant M. Overton.* Dodd, Mead. $2.50.

THE LIFE OF OSCAR WILDE. By *Robert Harborough Sherard.* Dodd, Mead. $5.

A SMALL BOY IN THE SIXTIES. By *George Sturt.* Cambridge University Press (Macmillan).

PARSON WEEMS OF THE CHERRY TREE. By *Harold Kellock.* Century. $2.

FIFTY MORE CONTEMPORARY ONE-ACT PLAYS. By *Frank Shay.* Appleton. $5.

DOES CIVILIZATION NEED RELIGION? By *Reinhold Niebuhr.* Macmillan. $2.

THE TRANSPLANTING. By *Marie Balascheff.* Edited by *Martha Genung Stearns.*

CRAWFORD W. LONG. By *Frances Long Taylor.* Hoeber. $4.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN. By *Smith Stimmel.* Minneapolis: William H. M. Adams.

JERRY TARBOT. New York: Tyler.

CHRISTIAN IV. By *John A. Gade.* Houghton Mifflin. $5.

MEMORIES AND NOTES. By *Anthony Hope.* Doubleday, Doran. $3 net.

BLACK MAJESTY. By *John W. Vandercook.* Harpers.

SILHOUETTES OF REPUBLICAN GREECE. By *Betty Cunliffe-Owen.* London: Hutchinson.

DANTON. By *Hilaire Belloc.* Putnam. $5.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY. By *Lewis Melville.* Doubleday, Doran. $6.

LIFE AND I. By *Gamaliel Bradford.* Houghton Mifflin. $3.50.

THE UNSPEAKABLE CURLL. By *Ralph Straus.* McBride. $10 net.

WINGS OF SONG: THE STORY OF CARUSO. By *Dorothy Caruso* and *Torrance Goddard.* Minton, Balch. $3.50.

Drama

WASHINGTON, THE STATESMAN: A DRAMA. By *Belle Willey Gue.* San Diego: Canterbury.

PLENTY OF TIME. By *Mary MacMillan.* Appleton.

STAGE DECORATION. By *Sheldon Cheney.* Day.

TWO PASSENGERS FOR CHELSEA AND OTHER PLAYS. By *Oscar W. Firkins.* Longmans, Green. $2.50.

THE ONE-ACT PLAYS OF LUIGI PIRANDELLO. Dutton. $2.50.

Economics

ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES. By *Harold Underwood Faulkner.* Macmillan.

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF WILLIAM MORRIS. By *Anna A. von Helmholtz-Phelan.* Duke University.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRUST COMPANIES IN THE UNITED STATES. By *James G. Smith.* Holt. $5.

SIMONDE DE SISMOND AS AN ECONOMIST. By *Mao-Lan Tuan.* Columbia University Press. $3.50.

SIDELIGHTS ON OUR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY. By *S. E. Forman.* Century. $2.25.

Fiction

PAPILLÉE. By MARCUS CHEKE. Morrow. 1928. $1.75.

We might have been a bit disappointed in this brief extravaganza after reading on the jacket-flap what the English critics had said about it. One remarked, "Not since I read Beardsley's precious fantasy, 'Under the Hill,' have I discovered a work with so strange a charm." Now, inasmuch as "Papillée" is entirely innocuous and "Under the Hill" is most distinctly of a very different sort, the mention of both in the same breath is inept. Neither will lovers of Ronald Firbank find the cipher for which they seek in this light and airy, burlesquing, and often quite funny recreation of the days of the Directory of 1797. The best bits are purely fantastic without a leer. The legless Papillée's descent from the ceiling above the chandeliers, at her rout, and her subsequent gallant dancing on artificial legs, is a high spot of humor in the book. Her sudden death, at the end, upon being addressed as "Grandma!", is a positive inspiration. The headdresses, costumes, and appurtenances of the period are described with a delight in the preposterous. The little book is brilliant with color and its plot an excellent travesty. The style is in keeping with the period, save for several odd grammatical lapses. On the whole this is a most engaging trifle, delicate amusement for an idle hour—an absurd state of society depicted with the richest appreciation. We hope for more books from Mr. Cheke; he is an excellent author for the light-minded.

TREVY THE RIVER. By LESLIE REID. Dutton. 1928. $2.50.

Leslie Reid has ere this created mysterious atmosphere. "The Rector of Maliseet" dealt with the dark and devious and weird in a manner slightly suggestive of Emily Brontë. But where the glorious Emily so completely succeeded, Leslie Reid failed. His story did not leave the compact and indelible impression that one felt it should. In homely phrase, "it didn't quite jell." It proved rather vague and meandering. Mere atmosphere, without proper dramatic values and increasing narrative interest leading to climax truly climactic, can never be quite enough. "Trevy the River" deals in a much more bucolic and dreamy way with a youth about whose origin legend has clustered. The character and course of the river by which he was born influence profoundly the life of this lad. There is some quietly beautiful writing in the description of the boy's wanderings, there are some scenes and characters well imagined in the episodes through which he moves. Leaving the place of his birth he follows the course of the river to its source, coming back to Hollowdean to kill Farmer Martindale who would dam his birth-stream. The symbolism of the tale is obvious. The boy is not at one with the life of this world. He was born of river-mystery. But the various incidents of the story do not, somehow, build up into an impressive whole. The tale meanders like the river—quite justifiably (the author might contend) inasmuch as it is desired to show the similitude between the boy's life and the river's life—but the simple fact is that that very endeavor makes for a rather thin and long-drawn-out narrative in which little really happens of much import. Mr. Reid can write with charm of the English countryside. He is poetic. He has feeling. But, to us at least, his style is not so markedly individual as to recompense us for the lack of drama in his tale.

THE SQUARE EMERALD. By *Foster Johns.* Day. $2 net.

ALL THE KING'S HORSES. By *Louis Stevens.* Day. $2.

THE YEARS BETWEEN. By *Paul Feval* and *M. Lassez.* Longmans, Green. 2 vols. $5.

WE SING DIANA. By *Wanda Fraiken Neff.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

THE GIRL EVERYBODY KNEW. By *James Farrell.* Harpers. $2.

PLUCK. By *Basil King.* Harpers. $2.

PEASANTS. By *Konrad Bercovici.* Doubleday, Doran. $2.

HUMAN JETTISON. By *Frederick C. Hicks.* St. Paul: West.

FACADE. By *Douglas Goldring.* McBride. $2 net.

THE EMPEROR FALLS IN LOVE. By *Octave Aubry.* Translated by *Henry Longan Stuart.* Harpers. $2.

THE SECRET WOMAN. By *Eden Phillpotts.* (Widecombe Edition.) Macmillan.

THE GOLDEN BEES. By *Daniel Henderson.* Stokes. $2.50.

MIGRATION. By *David Grew.*

AMBITION. By *Arthur Train. Scribner's.* $2.50.

THE KISS. By *M. K. Wisehart.* Century. $2.

PALAFOX. By *Sandys Wason.* London: Cope & Fenwick.

LUCIA IN LONDON. By *E. F. Benson.* Doubleday, Doran.

(*Continued on next page*)

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by EUGENE O'NEILL

ALL who have seen the play comment upon it, as not only a great play but a great novel. Its amazing asides bring to the drama a psychological fourth dimension attained previously only in the novel. And it reads with an intensity and directness few novels in literature have achieved.

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Author of "Robespierre"

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

KINSMEN AT WAR. By *J. N. McIlwraith.* Graphic. $2.

THE REDS OF THE MIDI. By *Felix Gras.* Appleton.

WHITE FOX. By *C. E. Scoggins.* Bobbs-Merrill. $1.75.

THE HEROINE. By *Eaton Stannard Barrett.* Stokes. $2.

POWER OF THE HILLS. By *Laurie York Erskine.* Appleton. $2.

THE LAND OF GREEN GINGER. By *Winifred Holtby.* McBride. $2 net.

STAINED SOILS. By *John T. McIntyre.* Stokes. $2.

THE CLUB CAR MYSTERY. By *Grace Colbron.* Macaulay. $2.

STRANGERS AND LOVERS. By *Edwin Granberry.* Macaulay. $2.

STRANGE DISAPPEARANCES. By *Elliott O'Donnell.* Dodd, Mead. $2.

FORBIDDEN. By *Joan Conquest.* Macaulay. $2.

MONEY FOR ONE. By *Berta Ruck.* Dodd, Mead. $2.

THE MURDERS IN PRAED STREET. By *John Rhode.* Dodd, Mead. $2.

HANDS UP. By *Albert M. Treynor.* Dodd, Mead. $2.

THE GRIM THIRTEEN. Edited by *Frederick S. Greene.* Dodd, Mead. $2.50.

CHEROKEE TRAILS. By *George W. Ogden.* Dodd, Mead. $2.

A CERTAIN DR. THORNDYKE. By *R. Austin Freeman.* Dodd, Mead. $2.

CHAPS AND CHUKKERS. By *Joseph B. Ames.* Century. $2.

MARIA CAPPONI. By *René Schickele.* Knopf. $3.

MARTIN SCHULER. By *Romer Wilson.* Knopf. $2.50.

ENDYMION. By *Benjamin Disraeli.* (Bradenham Edition.) Knopf.

(*Continued on next page*)

One of the 3 best sellers

[So reported with *Claire Ambler* and *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* by R. H. Macy, Brentano's and other leading bookstores throughout the country.]

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***Compiled by* CAMERON MANN**

The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 22. Suppose the President is about to appoint the first Poet Laureate of the United States. A leading newspaper compiles a symposium in which the question "Whom would you choose, and why?" is answered by at least six of the following people: Will Rogers, Harriet Monroe, Gene Tunney, H. L. Mencken, Gloria Swanson, F. P. A., Senator Borah, William Lyon Phelps, and the President of the W. C. T. U. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best symposium. (Entries, which should not exceed 400 words in all, should reach *The Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, not later than the morning of March 19.)

Competition No. 23. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best short lyric in which neither the letter S nor the word "and" occur. (Entries should reach *The Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of March 26th.)

Competitors are advised to read carefully the rules printed below.

THE NINETEENTH COMPETITION

A prize of fifteen dollars was offered for the brightest glimpse of our own advertising columns as they might appear in an issue during the Spring publishing season of A. D. 2428.

COMPETITORS betrayed an almost overwhelming inability to forget their own era. With the best will in the world I cannot persuade myself that the publishers of 2428 will be issuing innumerable books about the life and literature of the 1920's. But nearly everybody who did not foresee a volume about Mr. Mencken offered some contemporary substitute, Mr. Sinclair Lewis, Mr. Heywood Broun, and Mr. Will Rogers. Even Atlantis's broadcasting notes were hard to swallow. He draws attention to "In Quest of Peace," by H. L. Mencken. . . ."We have always been led to believe that he was but the super-critic, the disintegrator, the deicide. But this most touching of autobiographies, written two years before his untimely death in 1942, tells of his unhappy childhood, his disillusioned adolescence, and later his futile search for peace. . . . He has laid his mind, and even his soul bare, as no man has ever done, and we cannot but shed a tear for a shining star that had arisen before the sun had set." The conception is amusing: but this item is otherwise typically unimaginative. The language, the expression, the approach are all so unmistakably those of the day before yesterday.

I had expected at least a handful of entries in which some form of simplified spelling was adopted, as in Mr. Max Beerbohm's unforgettable "Enoch Soames," but nobody thought of that. The enormous majority of these blurbs of the future were indistinguishable from our own—excepting that they were seldom so well written. Nobody made convincing allowance for the inevitable growth of language (excepting in scientific fields) during the next five hundred years. One or two new words were shyly coined, and K. E. Waters, absorbing an unlikely slang word, wrote: "Mr. Fellowe presents Munckee as a bozo with some of the human failings."

Very few vital changes in the substance of literature were suggested. M. T. Harding suggested a study of the novel, in 2428 an obsolete form of literature supposed to have flourished in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Raynor Huntley's "Juvenile Bibleothica" offered a glimpse of a very terrible world.

SUBATOMIC ENERGY IN ACTINOCHEMICAL CHANGES: 41XZ671. Clever Pandect for Younger Readers. By Savant Amt102-n94xxx.

RETROACTIVE ZYMOLYSIS: 45MN572. Fractate in the lighter manner. By ZYMMETAPHYXOMOTICIAN Bz2963-3Z.

But this at least puts 1928 in its proper place.

While there were scores of references to American authors of this century, allusions to the great names of the past and the present were rare. Dante and Browning appeared.

THE BROWNING SAGA . . . A singularly moving and beautiful story of a group of people of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, beginning with Robert and Elizabeth Barrett and ending with Peaches.

And one competitor flattered the past so far as to include a new edition of Shakespeare in his list. It was curious that nobody promised fame to a single living poet.

Even the scientific light shed by our prophets was faint and blurred, though anybody who has read Professor J. B. S. Haldane's little pamphlets might have profited by them. There was at least one reference to ectogenetic babies and several to tabloid food. W. M. F. even went so far as to advertise the Modern Library in capsule form. "All the world's choicest books available to everyone. Unabridged editions in good quality capsules. Now you can be well-read with little effort. Simply swallow a capsule a day." This, no doubt, was satirically intended.

Hints of interplanetary intercourse were plentiful. As, for example,

CONSONANCE OF THE SPHERES, By A. S. Dfghjkl.

A. S. Dfghjkl is a distinguished Martian. His treatise on Thought Interference is authoritative and interesting. If you are communicating or communing with friends on the planets, concerning business or love, this book will be of inestimable value.

But no competitor achieved any really unified conception, and I have very reluctantly felt compelled to withhold the prize.

A few of the brighter glimpses may be printed.

BABBITT—HISTORICAL CHARACTER OR MYTH?

The final word on this interesting subject will probably never be written, but Professor Craxton has some important and hitherto unpublished data that seem to place Babbitt as a League of Nations President of the twenty-first century.

Novel XS3000. A Trilaboration: Cyclomanias by Hyper Steinwise; Synchronization by Marvelo Tangentius; Interpretyption by Mantra Literagraphia. "Unseemly inanity. Avoid it!" Professor Stall Loverly. "The first perfect novel. The completely mathematical and neodimensionised novel is achieved. Nature is now overcome, made superfluous and abandoned." Cliqued Critiquins. Doublepay, Macromilling, Scribblers, and Harpers. Everywhere.

The Possibilities of the Pneumatic Tube. By John Whitman.

The author, who was the first man to cross the Atlantic in a pneumatic tube, outlines the possibilities of this mode of travel. "In a few years the zoologist will be able to spend his morning in the laboratory, his afternoon in an African game preserve, and be home for the opera in the evening," according to Mr. Whitman.

RULES

(Competitors failing to comply with rules will be disqualified.) 1. Envelopes should be addressed to "The Competitions Editor, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 25 West 45th Street, New York City." The number of the competition (e.g., "Competition 1") must be written on the top left-hand corner. 2. ALL MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned. 3. *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry.

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Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review.*

In accordance with my promise, here are two of the lists offered by the Library School of the Los Angeles Public Library in response to my call for a list of fiction representative of American conditions and ideals. The first, by Mary Dorothy Metz, is the one to which has been awarded the impromptu prize of a copy of "Marching On." It is addressed to "A dispirited reader of things American," and reads as follows:

BEING the complex product of civilization, America is a mosaic, a gem of many facets, both alluring and alarming. It isn't fair for a man to read Dos Passos's "Manhattan Transfer," Mencken's diatribes, Lewis's "Main Street," Nathan's "American Credo," Dreiser's "American Tragedy," and Cabell's "Cream of the Jest" and consider that he has examined all sides of the nation. The pessimist is almost as unbearable as the optimist. America is youthful enough to have romance, and to be wise with the wisdom of simplicity, and strength. She is delightful as well as repellant, gracious as well as cruel, intelligent as well as untutored. She is too tremendous to be any one thing, and her many moods are well worth studying.

What of the tender, earthy spell of Willa Cather's "My Antonia," the exalting story of a Bohemian girl's pioneering in Nebraska? What of the colorful, salty, straight-laced period of Salem in the forties? Hergesheimer captures it in the careful, gorgeous paragraphings of his "Java Head." Then there is Margeret Wilson's rugged novel of a Scotch family in Iowa, just after the Civil War period, "The Able McLaughlins."

Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter," that epic of Puritanism, has a rueful beauty. Du Bose Heyward has written a sympathetic tale of Charleston negroes in "Porgy," and Booth Tarkington's "Growth," the trilogy containing "The Magnificent Ambersons," "The Turmoil," and "The Midlander," shows another phase of American life.

Henry James's subtle, still-life writing contrasted "The American" with older European civilizations. Struthers Burt in "The Interpreter's House" considers the problems of modern Americans. Edith Wharton's "Ethan Frome," tragic as it is, gives an uncompromising portrait of New England's "stern and rock-bound coast" whose people's ethics are also stern and rock-bound.

How can one judge a country that has not one small spirit, but a New England, a Southern, a Middle-Western, and Western attitude? Consider Frank Norris's great trilogy, "The Epic of Wheat," sagas of the Middle-West, Sherwood Anderson's search for truth along the Mississippi in "Dark Laughter," and Heywood Broun's New York newspaper story, "The Boy Grew Older."

As we continue our list it becomes increasingly obvious that no single novelist or group of novelists can capture the full spirit of America. The scope is too vast, not only in territory and history, but in ideas, in manifestations of beauty as well as of ugliness. There is no great American novel, no great American novelist, there are simply American novels and American novelists. "An American Tragedy" is no less true, no more true than "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" or "McTeague" or "Moby Dick." They are all phases, written exceptionally well, containing much truth, much wisdom, and concerning portions of American life and customs.

No set of rules can apply to all of such a vast, and capricious country, just as no set of rules can apply to all people. It is folly to chalk off either Heaven or Hell as our destination, because the lines converge and confuse. Only, in accepting the realists or romanticists, let us not forget the classicists—and all the other ists and isms that somehow belong to a civilization, even though it be as young as the American.

The second, by Frances E. Crosby, is offered for the enlightenment of the intelligent newcomer to these shores. Here it is:

YOUR call for a list of books that will present to new Americans the spirit of America and the psychology of the people has intrigued my interest. Although you have not put a limit on the list, I have selected only ten titles because it would seem that a longer list might weaken the interest of any but the most determined reader.

I have not tried to cover all periods of American history nor all phases of American life. The literature of a country in which many nationalities have been mingled must necessarily be as varied as its people.

Aldrich, Bess Streeter. "The Cutters." (The average American family)

Cather, Willa S. "O Pioneers!" (Mid-western pioneer prairie life)

Churchill, Winston. "The Crossing." (Westward movement after the Revolutionary War)

Crane, Stephen. "The Red Badge of Courage." (Psychological reactions of a farmer boy recruited for service in the Civil War)

Fisher, Dorothy Canfield. "Bent Twig." (College life in Middle West)

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "Scarlet Letter." (Spiritual forces of Puritan New England which have influenced American thought and action even to the present day)

Hergesheimer, Joseph. "Three Black Pennys." (Development of a great American industry and family through three generations)

Quick, Herbert. Trilogy: "Vandermark's Folly"; "Hawkeye"; "Invisible Woman." (Growth of one of the great agricultural states of the Middle West)

Stribling, Thomas. "Birthright." (Negro question)

Wister, Owen. "The Virginian." (American institution—the cowboy)

THE librarian of the University of Nebraska sends to the inquirer about imaginary books a copy of the latest catalogue of L'Arxiu, Llibreria de Joan B. Batlle, Barcelona, Spain, in which appears the item, "Brunet, G.: Imprimeurs imaginaires et libraires supposés. Etude bibliographique. Paris 1866." *M. R. S. Youngstown, O., identifies the Kipling reference* to money as "the stuff that goes from hand to hand and never grows any warmer"—finding it—of all places—in "The Second Jungle Book," that I thought I knew better than that; it is in the third story, "Letting in the Jungle," in a dialogue between Mowgli, Messua, and her husband, which she transcribes. *H. W., Washington, Iowa, asks if "Charlotte Temple" is still in print.* I would have said offhand that the only way to get a copy (paper-covered) would be to lie in wait on the edge of Trinity Churchyard at the lunch period and snatch from a stenographer one of the battered copies sometimes brought to this spot. Or you might keep an eye open in the subway, where copies are now and again to be seen. But I find on a more systematized search that Funk & Wagnalls have it in print for a dollar and a quarter, bound in cloth—in which condition I would never recognize it— with historical data, annotations, and a revision of the text in the interest of accuracy. As this inquirer is forming a reference shelf for early American literature, she should look over the series called "An American Bookshelf," published by Macy-Masius, and full of gems of which the brightest is "Samuel Sewall's Diary." It is a joy to find the Reverend Samuel exercising on a man all the arguments lately employed against the bob for women, for he had cut his hair in order the better to wear a wig. Parson Sewall labored with him a whole day: The main difference between then and now was that at the end of the session the subject promised to let his hair grow out again. Another item that may interest her is an amusing biography, "Parson Weems of the Cherry Tree," by Harold Kellock, lately published by the Century Co. Macy-Masius publish Weems's Washington.

The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Travel

TIMBUCTOO. By LELAND HALL. Harpers. 1927. $4.

This is a disturbing book. It is not, strictly speaking, a "book of travel," because it is an account of a residence rather than a journey, and of a mental rather than a geographical expansion. The author does indeed tell us, with straightforward details which anyone might follow next week, how to reach Timbuctoo; take a house there; engage a servant. But after these preliminaries, we are absorbed in the native life of Timbuctoo and its various inhabitants, Arabs, Berbers, and Blacks, as completely as Doughty was caught up in the life of the Bedouins of Arabia Deserta. As completely, as sympathetically, but not as continuously, for, unlike the unfailing absorption of the earlier writer in his alien scene, Mr. Hall occasionally casts eye or mind back over Mediterranean or Atlantic Oceans, and sets up, questioningly and somewhat ruefully, comparisons of our western customs, judgments, and standards, which seem to totter and sway slightly in the African sands. A few simple men stand out, alive and complete, "visionary, radiant, in the light of Timbuctoo," and succeed in questioning, by ignoring, our whole western edifice.

There is no spell in the book, if by that we mean artifice, conscious sifting, definite focusing from a "point of view;" all qualities the author disclaims; but there is more than a spell: a magic which recreates the people of this land, with complete simplicity—sympathy—and liveliness.

THINGS SEEN IN NORTH WALES. By *W. T. Palmer.* Dutton. $1.50.

Brief Mention

The stack of books that towers before us is a heterogeneous lot, ranging from biography to travel and including in its number such divergent works as a volume on wild beasts and a eulogy of the gastronomic art. Readers of mature years who remember when the "Prisoner of Zenda" was a best seller, and who recall the popularity of the "Dolly Dialogues," will no doubt be interested in the fact that among this pile of publications is a volume of reminiscences by Anthony Hope. "Memories and Notes (Doubleday, Doran: $3) is a pleasing, gossipy work, with an excellent chapter on Jowett and Oxford, and always readable, even where its context is rather thin. The same public that hailed with satisfaction the appearance of a new book from Anthony Hope's pen will read with an interest born of their familiarity with his repute and his personality of an odd incident in the literary career of Charles Eliot Norton. Under the title, "A Curious History in Book Editing" (New York: Antigone Press), Kate Stephens unfolds the record of the unhappy experience that was hers when in the capacity of Junior Editor of the Heart of Oak Books (known to thousands of youthful readers) she was deprived of the recognition of her work through the removal of her name from the title page and the appearance on it of that of Charles Eliot Norton alone. Miss Stephens includes many letters from Norton which plainly set forth his reliance upon her judgment and his acknowledgment of the preponderant part played by her in the preparation of the series. According to her, after the work had been got well under way the publishers decided that Norton's name alone was of value and manœuvered her out of prominence. Miss Stephens's feelings, as may be imagined, are not of the kindest either toward her collaborator or her publisher.

In "The Remaking of an American" (Doubleday, Doran), Elizabeth Banks, an American newspaper woman who for many years so completely identified herself with English journalism and England as in the eyes of her British friends to appear one of their own number, recounts incidents of her life in her adopted country and encounters with some of its celebrities, provides comment and letters bearing upon public and private events, and furnishes in general a lively and pleasantly discursive portrayal of the activities of a woman of ability and energy whose career brought her into contact with many personalities of interest. Like so many other expatriated Americans, when the War broke out and

(*Continued on next page*)

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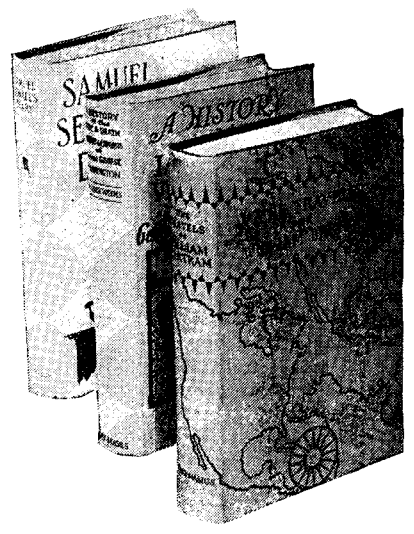

SAMUEL SEWALL'S DIARY

Van Wyck Brooks in "Books": This book is the best picture we have of early New England; it should be read by all moderns.

A HISTORY OF THE LIFE & DEATH, VIRTUES & EXPLOITS OF GENERAL GEO. WASHINGTON by Parson Weems

Herbert Solow in "The Literary Review": This book should be put in the hands of every patriot. Much amusement is in store for its readers.

THE TRAVELS OF WM. BARTRAM

Walter Yust in The Phila. Ledger: It is rich and rewarding, entertaining and informative, a fine exciting travel book.

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The Philadelphia Ledger says: "Eddie Foy proves himself a vivid reporter of the early American scene. The story moves as rapidly as fiction—sometimes as rapidly as melodrama, and the journey from Then to Now is punctuated by high spots of extreme interest."

CLOWNING THROUGH LIFE

By Eddie Foy

Buy the book. If after you have read fifty pages you wish to return it we would be glad to have you do so.

(*For example:* Try the Iroquois fire on page 274.)

New Price — $3.00

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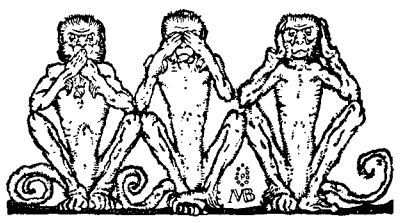

SHOP TALK

One of the nicest things about the book business is the fact that there are very few "corporations without souls," such as those found in other industries. In almost every instance in the case of the publisher and bookseller, no matter how old the organization may be, there is at its head a person bearing the name of the founder; one who takes an active interest in the work, from the opening of the mail each morning to the sealing and stamping of the mail each evening.

One of the oldest names in the book trade in this country is *Brentano's*. "Booksellers To The World," they call themselves, and with their branches in Chicago, Washington, and Paris, and their publishing branch in London, as well as their patrons in many cities throughout the land, this proud slogan is not without reason. The *Arthurs Brentano*, senior and junior, *Lowell* and *August* are the four workers in this organization who bear the firm name. Lowell, besides being a playwright—which is an evocation—is directing their publishing ventures and national advertising. The other three are in the newest of the *Brentano* stores at 1 West 47th St., New York City.

At the head of the steps leading to the juvenile and magazine department at 1 West 47th Street, is a painting. A female figure, flanked by tables and shelves of books, holds an open volume aloft. Her attitude is that of the statue which France presented to us and which is to be found in New York harbor. She is "Liberty Enlightening the World," the right person to preside over this establishment. The *Brentanos* were at considerable pains when opening this store to see that everything about it was "just so." It is modern, it is smart, and yet somehow it has remained an old-fashioned book store with shelves and tables filled with one of the most complete stocks of any bookselling establishment in the world. A cloistered department at the rear of the main floor for the sale of old and rare books and fine bindings is presided over by "*A. B. Sr.*," than whom there is no more genial host, and one imagines his clients paying willingly for both the rare books and the rare pleasure of conversing with him for many minutes. Foreign books in many languages can be found in a department of their own on the mezzanine. In the basement there are juveniles, and the world's magazines. It is, in fact, a little book world all by itself, ruled by courtesy and the spirit of service. "*A .B .Jr.*" is chairman of the Board of Trade of the *Booksellers Association, Sidney Avery*, who manages the Chicago store, is an ex-officer, and *John Loos* at the branch store at 27th Street and 5th Avenue has also been closely identified with A. B. A. work. These are the type of booksellers in the Association—an Association that includes all the progressive booksellers in America. No one of its members sells books through slot-machines or sly insinuations. Real booksellers were intended by nature to act as distributors for the best in literature, knowing that they may advise, but never "sell." That's why the bookstore is the only place in which one ought to buy books, where, in other words, a *personal* bookservice is at your disposal.

Ellis Ames Ballard

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

American Booksellers Association

Brief Mention

(Continued from preceding page)

her own country was under fire for maintaining neutrality, Miss Banks felt a resurgence of Americanism. Gradually it was borne in upon her that at heart and in principle she was an American, and having come to that conclusion, she has since taken up residence in her native country. The life of a small boy in the England of the middle of the nineteenth century is pleasantly depicted in George Sturt's "A Small Boy in the Sixties" (Cambridge University Press: Macmillan), a gentle and genial chronicle, built of small incident and undramatic events, but nevertheless full-flavored. Charming, too, in an unobtrusive sort of way is G. Bouchard's "Other Days Other Ways" (Montreal: Carrier: $2.50), a collection of vignettes and sketches of the French Canada of the not so distant past which briefly, but sympathetically, presents its people and its customs.

So much for the strictly biographical works. Semi-biographical in character are those volumes of travel in which the authors recount their personal experiences as well as comment upon the lands they visited. Such volumes are "Through Jade Gate and Central Asia" (Houghton Mifflin: $3.50), by Mildred Cable and Francesca French, an account of the first trip across the Gobi desert by western women. The authors were missionaries, who, assigned to a distant post, made their way through the Chinese country, infested though it was by bandits, and accomplished their journey only after many adventures and much excitement. Their chronicle has room for much interesting discussion of native manners and customs, and is the record of heroic spirits. Full of the enchantment of the little known is H. S. Banner's "Romantic Java as It Was and Is" (Lippincott), a scholarly work that loses nothing of interest because of its scientific character. The book is packed full of interesting facts, descriptions of native customs, discussion of the arts of the country, of its scenic features, of its ceremonies and celebrations. It is made from the British sheets—somewhat of a pity since the format is less attractive than that to which the American public is accustomed in its narratives of travel. A heavy book to handle, but one enlivened by numerous interesting illustrations, and with pages made easy on the eye by broad margins, is "Towns and People of Modern Germany" (McBride: $5 net), by Robert Medill McBride, the publisher. Mr. McBride here turns from Spain on which he has been writing lately to Germany; he presents much interesting information on the country, its people, the monuments of their past and the cities of their present. Historical, and not descriptive, is the last book in our group on different localities, "Colorado; Short Studies of Its Past and Present" (University of Colorado: $2), containing valuable sidelights on the early history of the state, with a chapter for good measure on Colorado literature.

Finally we come to a batch of miscellaneous books including that volume on the beasts of the jungle to which we referred in the beginning, not in their native habitat, but in captivity. In "Birds and Beasts of the Roman Zoo" (Century: $4), Theodore Knottnerus-Meyer, for many years director of the Zoölogical Gardens of Rome, brings together a number of incidents in the lives of animals in captivity, furbishing it forth with a running comment upon the habits of the beasts and the conditions under which they are best reared in captivity. Here, too, in this batch is the volume of which we made mention on the gastronomic art. "A Book of Food" (Knopf: $4), by P. Morton Shand, is a rapturous dissertation on the delights of good food, together with comment on a large number of specific dainties and delectable comestibles. In "Clothes" (Appleton: $3.50), Helena Chalmers furnishes an historical account of the history of dress from the earliest times to the present, supplementing it with many valuable hints in regard to stage costuming. Finally, to mention the last books in the now completely demolished pile we have had before us, "Time and Change" (Marshall Jones), by William Everett Cram, is a slim volume of nature essays, unpretentious, but readable, and a little booklet by John Galsworthy presents "Two Forsyte Interludes" (Scribners). It contains two short stories, one a love story with much sentiment and charm, the other, one more episode in the life of that most interesting of all the Galsworthy characters, old Soames. These stories will be links in the chain of the next volume of the Forsyte saga.

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On Type

THE history of printing began with the invention of movable types, and while the direct cause of the use of type was the endeavor to make books more speedily, increase in speed, after the first flush of the invention, did not again influence printing till the invention of the cylinder press about 1800. From that time to the present, rapid developments have taken place in the machinery for printing, none of which has contributed materially to the improvement of the art, and none of which is especially apparent to the eye in the printed product; as a matter of fact even the most intricate color half-tone plate is printed frequently on the hand press.

But type has changed and changed again in its form and style, and no one can be unaware that, for instance, a fifteenth-century book is different in appearance from a Pickering edition. The difference is due in part to the changed arrangement of the parts of the book, such as the adoption of the title-page, but mostly due to the change in the form of the type face. Great effort and energy has gone into the designing of type and its manufacture. From Gutenberg's massive black-letter, probably cast in sand moulds, to that "microscopique" letter of Henri Didot, so small that twenty-five lines of it occupy but an inch, ingenuity and taste of hand and eye have produced a really extraordinary variety of letters. And style and fashion have dictated both the form and the composition of these types.

The difference between Gutenberg's black-letter and Didot's infinitesimal roman is apparent to any tyro: but the difference between the Italian and French romans of the sixteenth century is less easy except to the trained eye, and between Didot modern roman and modern romans cut in England and America in the nineteenth century, even sharper eyes and more training are needed. Even the difference between Caslon's and Baskerville's letters, apparent enough to the printer, and, in mass and detail apparent to the novice when pointed out, is difficult to describe and catalogue so that any except one trained in printing can distinguish the two in a casual book.

It is only recently that the man in the street has shown an interest in type as type, or that any attempt has been made to train his eye. And the effort seems to me almost hopeless. Type is so delicate a bit of design, the minute differences are so baffling, so much depends upon having "lived with" type forms, that I cannot imagine a general knowledge of the different styles of letters will ever be attained. And, too, there is, of course, no one or two best types: the competent typographer will achieve successful results with a type face which is not in itself first-class. Yet there will always remain a fairly large class of fine types, the survivals, as Mr. Updike has called them, which have proved their worth because they are both useful *and* beautiful. They will be used in the production of beautiful books, but I doubt if the general public will ever be able to differentiate properly between the true and the false. That must be the work of the specialist. R.

ONE of the rarest books is likely to be the diary of Adams H. Dickey, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy's attendant, which has lately come into prominence through extracts published in the New York *World*. There are said to have been five hundred copies printed at the Merrymount Press, three hundred of which were sequestered before they could be sold. Two hundred, which had been sold, were apparently traced and in a manner suppressed. Two copies only would seem to be available for examination—those deposited with the Library of Congress in connection with the copyright entry. These two copies have now been placed with the rare books—as indeed they are.

CARTERET Book Club of Newark has issued "The Pageant of Newark-on-Trent," written by Mr. L. H. Patterson of the Newark *Evening News*. The book is an interesting account of the older Newark, and is fully illustrated from contemporary photographs and rare prints. It is very well printed as a quarto by the Harbor Press, the composition, in Caslon type, and the presswork being admirable. Two hundred copies are printed, a few for non-members being for sale at $15. The illustrations are printed by the off-set process in the text, and the whole book has a very workmanlike look about it, showing much care and planning to adjust all the details to the requirements of a fine and limited edition.

EXHIBITION OF BOOK CLUB BOOKS

THERE has been at the Grolier Club an exhibition of the publications of American and French book clubs; three English clubs and one German were also represented. The exhibition, which remained open through March 4, did not boast completeness either in the list of clubs represented, or in the publications selected for any of the organizations. But the visitor could, we believe, get a pretty fair idea of which American clubs have published books, and what sort of books each has published.

The Grolier Club was not represented in the exhibition, which makes comparison between the work of that club and of others rather difficult. There were seventeen American clubs represented, three English, seven French, and one German: altogether of the two hundred books shown, about one hundred and fifty are printed in America, of which twelve printers produced ninety-five volumes. It will be somewhat surprising to most people that R. R. Donnelley & Sons Co. of Chicago headed the list with a total of eighteen.

The French books excel in illustration; there is more emotion about them. The patch of color which they presented contrasted with the black and white of the rest of the exhibition. The New England clubs honored British and American tradition; the Book Club of California, in spite of its interest in the fifteenth century, was somewhat inclined to scrap tradition. To this observer The Caxton Club made the best showing in the American group; the books of this club compare favorably with the others typographically, and more favorably from the point of view of their contents.

(G. L. McK.)

SOME SMALL BOOKS

FROM Paul Johnston, Minetta Court, New York, comes the first issue of the Contemporary Poets series of the Poetry Quartos—"Lilith," by Gustav Davidson. It is a slight thing, but appropriately printed, with a wood cut by Paul Johnston, and simply issued in paper covers.

Bowling Green Press, New York, has issued an unpublished play of George Moore's, "The Making of an Immortal," with an introduction by Mr. Moore. The book is well printed, but possesses less value as a piece of literature than as a hitherto unknown Moore item, as which it will be of interest to collectors. Twelve hundred and forty copies have been printed by Rudge, all signed by the author.

Tinkering with the alphabet is a favorite pastime with some, and may eventually make smoother the path of the father who has to explain to his daughter the long or short value of i and y in diverse English words. From the Oxford University Press comes what on first glance is a weirdly printed book—Robert Bridges's "The Influence of the Audience on Shakespeare's Drama." The oddity of the volume is due not to the familiar simplified spelling, but to certain new characters arbitrarily introduced into common English words. Thus the sound of long i, rendered in a score of ways in ordinary spelling, is reduced to one symbol—an i with a tail. The soft and hard g

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are differentiated, and an n with a tail is used for the ing suffix. The irritating proposal of the simplified-spellers in the matter of omitting the final mute e is followed, but this is about all—for the present. The book is the first of what will eventually be a volume of Mr. Bridges's collected essays, and we are promised further modifications of the language in subsequent fascicles. The printing is excellent, in "Poliphilus" and "Blado" type, the new characters prepared under direction of Mr. Morison.

R.

MAGGS' catalogues are always a delight, the last one (No. 498), "Etchings and Engravings by Early and Modern Masters"—consisting mainly of colored aquatints, lithographs, mezzotints, and a few woodcuts—is no exception to the rule. It is curious how etchings still persist in being the autocrats of the graphic family. A well known print curator aptly defined etchings as "purchasable badges of culture," and so they remain. In this catalogue, for instance, an original Pennell drawing is priced less than half of one late artist's etchings, all of which points to a moral. There are no great surprises or finds among the 681 items listed. Among interesting bits of Americana,—Revolutionary worthies and nineteenth-century views—the collectable naval and shipping scenes, prints by early and modern masters, the inevitable "wedding present print" and the superlative and significant, trite and hackneyed, are a large number of really decorative prints. Only one print in ten looks well on the wall, a function for which few of the older ones were made. There are the expensive variety of decorative prints like the too familiar "Lady Hamilton as Nature," and those for a more modest purse to be found under the heading of "Military Costumes." Here the whole pageantry of the British Army blazes forth in the colors of a century ago—admirable decorations, though not "badges of culture," for the cramped quarters of the modern apartment.

(T. S.)

WALPOLE'S COMMON-PLACE BOOK

MR. WILMARTH S. LEWIS, whose collection of Walpoliana is second to none in this country, has edited and published through William Edwin Rudge, New York, a redaction of Horace Walpole's "Common-Place Book." Mr. Lewis says in his introduction: "This little book was used by Horace Walpole to record passing events and passing thoughts. The special interest in it for us is that he actually used it in writing his letters and in preparing his 'Works' for posthumous publication. It covers the period 1780-83."

The book is a 32mo, 2½ x 4¼ inches, and composed of a skilfully executed facsimile of the original Walpole note-book, including the marbled-paper covers, an introduction by the editor, a type-printed version of the text, and explanatory notes. Five hundred copies have been printed, and the minute volume is housed in a recessed dummy volume similar to that which preserves the original in Mr. Lewis's collection. The binding of the volume and of the dummy case seem a little ordinary, and the paper of the book is too stiff for so small a book, but on the whole it has something of the flavor of Walpole's own work, and is a fairly satisfactory solution of the problem confronting editor and publisher.

Arnold Zweig, says the *London Observer*, whose tale of a Russian prisoner "Der Streit um den Sergeanten Grischa" (Potsdam: Kiepenhauer) is now very generally recognized as the finest picture of life behind the trenches yet given by any German writer, is hard at work upon the two volumes which will make of the "Grischa" story a trilogy unique of its kind.

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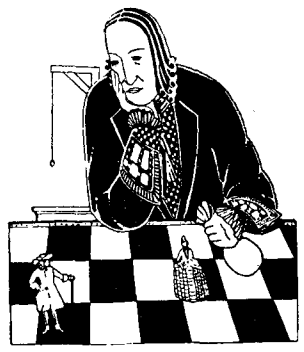

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW has requested us to print their regrets in this column for printing last week a review of "Bad Girl" by *Viña Delmar*. In so doing they anticipated the publication date of the book, the actual date being April 6th. By error, the book having been reviewed from an advance copy, *Mrs. Frank's* criticism of the volume was printed ahead of time. . . .

In their World's Classics series, the Oxford University Press American Branch now offers "The Autobiography of Benjamin Haydon," edited with an introduction by *Edmund Blunden*. One should purchase and compare it with *Aldous Huxley's* recent editing of Haydon, brought out a year or so ago by Doran. . . .

In the future W. W. Norton & Company, of 70 Fifth Avenue, will act as publishers and distributors for the American-Scandinavian Foundation. In the Spring two books will be published, "Norway's Best Stories" and "Sweden's Best Stories"; a similar volume of Danish fiction will follow in the Autumn. . . .

For thirteen years *The Menorah Journal* has been the world's leading review devoted to Jewish art, life, and letters. It has been issued bi-monthly. Now it becomes a full-fledged monthly magazine and will much expand its policy. . . .

Note well that *Robert Cortes Holliday*, author not only of "Walking Stick Papers" and other books of essays, but also of that useful volume, "The Business of Writing," established in January, 1928, The Robert Cortes Holliday School of Writing and Editorial Work at Englewood Cliffs, N. J. The course he directs at that institution has not its like, nor anything like its like, elsewhere in the world. Here is "a debunked course in real writing," full of candor, wisdom, and wit. The class is limited to a group of selected students. Needless to say, we can recommend Mr. Holliday most heartily to any aspiring writer who really wishes to look the facts in the face. . . .

Manuscripts for the third Dodd, Mead prize novel contest, inaugurated for the best first novel by an American or Canadian author, must be submitted before December 1, 1928. There are no limitations as to the subject of the stories, but the contestants are urged not to aim at serialization or motion picture possibilities. A prize of $5,000 will be awarded solely on the availability of the manuscript as a book publication. Complete details may be obtained from Curtis Brown Limited, 116 West 39th Street, New York City. . . .

Lewis Browne, who wrote "This Believing World" and "That Man Heine," will be represented by a new book in April. This is "The Graphic Bible," which retells the traditional story of the Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelations, in a totally new way. The book consists of one hundred large "animated" maps drawn by the author to show where and how the great Bible events occurred, and of explanatory text weaving the story around these maps. Mr. Browne's drawings for his earlier work, "This Believing World," were selected by The American Institute of Graphic Arts for exhibition at the Art Center last year. . . .

Now that *Thornton Wilder's* "The Bridge" is in the best-seller class, and this modest young man finds himself shivering in the pitiless limelight, acclaimed on all sides as a master of style and a writer of contemporary classics, it amuses us to turn up an old copy of that now defunct little magazine, *The Double Dealer*, lately published in the south. In its short life it could lay claim to having many prominent literati as contributors. But we are in possession of the first page of Vol. IV, No. 21, of *The Double Dealer* for September, 1922. Here are reproduced "Sentences. By *Thornton N. Wilder.*" They run as follows:

I

In the Italian quarter of London I found a group of clerks, waiters, and idealistic barbers calling itself The Rosicrucian Mysteries, Soho Chapter, that met to read papers on the fabrication of gold and its metaphysical implications, to elect from its number certain Arch-adepts and *magistri hieraticorum*, to correspond with the last of the magi, Orzindamazda on Mt. Sinai, and to retell, wide-eyed, their stories of how some workmen near Rome, breaking by chance into the tomb of Cicero's daughter, Tulliola, discovered an everburning lamp suspended in mid-air, its wick feeding on Perpetual Principle; of how Cleopatra's son Caesarion was preserved in a translucent liquid, "oil of gold," and could be still seen in an underground shrine at Vienna; and of how Virgil never died, but was alive still on the Island of Patmos, eating the leaves of a peculiar tree.

II

In Rome I encountered a number of people who for one reason or another were unable to sleep between midnight and dawn, and when I tossed sleepless, or when I returned late to my rooms through the deserted streets—at the hour when the parricide feels a cat purring about his feet in the darkness—I pictured to myself old Baldassare in the Borgo, former Bishop of Shantung and Apostolic Visitor to the Far East, rising at two to study with streaming eyes the Fathers and the Councils, marvelling, he said, at the continuous blooming of the rose-tree of Doctrine; or of Stasia, a Russian refugee who had lost the habit of sleeping after dark during her experience as nurse in the War, Stasia playing solitaire through the night and brooding over the jocose tortures to which her family had been subjected by the soldiers of Taganrog; and of Elizabeth Grier who, like some German prince of the Eighteenth Century, owned her own band of musicians, listening the length of her long shadowed room to some new work that D'Indy had sent her, or bending over the score while her little troups revived the overture to *Les Indes Galantes*.

One perceives the incipience of "The Cabala." . . .

Herschel Brickell is now, of course, hard at work with Henry Holt and Company, *Bruce Gould* having followed him as "Books on Our Table" man on the *New York Evening Post*. Brickell's department in *The North American Review* goes on just as formerly, despite his new occupation. We wish "Brick" all the breaks in his work. He is an able and fair-minded critic. . . .

. . . . *Thanking you for your kind attention.*

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TRADER HORN is on his way to America.

Now it can be told.

The last of the saga-tellers, this seventy-three-year-old trafficker in ebony, is now a first-class passenger on the *S. S. Olympic*, due in New York Tuesday, March 13th.

Ten years ago, after years of fighting and trading and trailing all over the globe, ALFRED ALOYSIUS drifted back for a spell to his beloved Lancashire. He made home with his married daughter and became a boon companion of his five-year-old grandson, Sandy.

One day, prowling about London Town, his head full of the spaces of land and sea, Alfred Aloysius *lost Sandy*.

A Bobby found Sandy, but his grandfather trekked on—to South Africa. He had lost Sandy—"Aye! And that's something no woman can ever forgive."

Ten years—and no word from ALFRED ALOYSIUS, now once more TRADER HORN.

Then in 1927 Sandy's mother picked up a copy of *The Illustrated London News* and found herself looking at Dad—who offered the world a gridiron and received fame as a price.

That's how TRADER HORN came home for Christmas, and now he's on his way to the land of which he said in his lodging-house scrawlings in Johannesburg:

"If you can write a book that knocks young and old, gives 'em a good laff and no harm to susceptibilities—that's what goes in America. A moral people except when it comes to murder'n . . . . . .

"Aye, the Americans must have novelties, whether in search of one of those new breakfast foods or in literary matters.

"They're somewhat more choicey than the English. The May Flower's always been a genteel influence in the pages of History."

When invited to be guest of honor at a dinner given by a famous club, and told about the notables he would find there, ALFRED ALOYSIUS replied:

"I don't mind what they are that way. All I want to know is—are they convivials?"

Of this dinner to the ancient mariner, ANDREW DAKERS says:

"We listened to ALOYSIUS HORN, unwearied, unweariable. Round about two o'clock in the morning, he stripped to the waist to let us poor stay-at-homes see what the scar of the wound made by a tap of a lion's paw looked like on a human back. It looked like a very rough map of Australia.

"An assegai wound over a foot long across the front of the body looked like miraculously avoided death; and the lion's chew-mark below the shoulder looked as if it must have been painful.

"Oh, yes, ALOYSIUS HORN is real; he is scarred with truth for the confounding of sceptics . . ."

Just before TRADER HORN boarded *The Olympic* for New York he received this cablegram:

Welcome To America From One Hundred Thousand Convivials—Especially

—ESSANDESS

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